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SPARE MINUTE SERIES.

CHEERFUL WORDS.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF GEORGE MACDONALD.

SELECTED BY

E. E. BROWN.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

JAMES T. FIELDS.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT must be a very remote corner of America, indeed, where the writings of George MacDonald would not only be known, but ardently loved. *David Elginbrod*, *Ranald Bannerman*, *Alec Forbes*, *Robert Falconer*, and *Little Diamond* have many friends by this time all over the land, and are just as real personages, thousands of miles west of New York and Boston, as they are hereabouts. Now there must be some good reason for this exceptional universality of recognition, and it is not at all difficult to discern why MacDonald's characters should be welcome guests everywhere. The writer who speaks through his beautiful creatures of imagination, imploring us to believe that

“ Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For the good they comprehend not.
That the feeble hands and helpless
Groping blindly in the darkness

Touch God's right hand in that darkness
And are lifted up and strengthened —"

that writer, if he be a master of his art, like MacDonald, will be a light and a joy in every household, however situated.

It is pleasant, always, to hold up for admiration the authors who have borne witness to the eternal beauty and cheerful capabilities of the universe around us, whatever may be our own petty sufferings or discomforts; who continually teach us that Optimism is better than Pessimism, and much more moral as a conduct of life, and are lovingly reminding us, whenever they write books or poems, of the holiness of helpfulness. All MacDonald's pages are a protest against selfishness, and that mean and narrow spirit which would elevate our petty selves above our contemporaries, and arrogate to an individual catalogue all the virtues that are attainable by mortal acquirement.

Heine observes, somewhere, that we must not investigate too curiously the lives of prominent men. "They are, oftentimes," says the witty poet, "like the bright gleams of light which glow so brilliantly that we think they must be jewels hung on leaf and twig by king's children at play in the royal gardens—but if we search for them by day we find no glittering gem, but only a repulsive little insect, which crawls painfully away, and which our feet do not crush, only for some strange compassion." The personality of the author from whom these happily-chosen extracts have been made, will bear the closest inspection at any and at all times. As a novelist, an essayist, a poet, and a preacher, he stands always in broad sunlight, and no dark shadow ever rests upon the dial of his pure and

healthy inspiration. Those of us who know the man, and love the sound of his pleasant voice, so full of tender sympathy with all that is best and strengthening in human life, on comparing notes, would not hesitate to claim for him the eulogy expressed in these beautiful old sixteenth century verses—verses embalming an exceptional character, and one which the abiding Wisdom of Poesy never ceases to hold up for our pattern, in all that exalts and dignifies the soul of man and woman.

“Within these woods of Arcadie
 He chief delight and pleasure tooke
 And on the mountain Parthenie,
 Upon the chrystall liquid brooke :
 The muses met him every day,
 That taught him sing, to write and say.

* * * * * *

A sweet attractive kind of grace,
 A full assurance given by lookes,
 Continuall comfort in a face,
 The lineaments of Gospell bookes ;
 I trowe that countenance cannot lie,
 Whose thoughts are legible in the eie.

Was never eie did see that face,
 Was never eare did heere that tongue,
 Was never minde did minde his grace,
 That ever thought the travell longe ;
 But eies and eares, and every thought
 Were with his sweet perfections caught.”

JAMES T. FIELDS.

GEORGE MACDONALD, M.A., L.L.D.

GEORGE MacDonald, preacher, poet, novelist and essayist, was born in Huntley, Aberdeenshire, in the year 1825. His father was at that time one of the proprietors of the Huntley Mills; and the annals of the little parish show that he was a lineal descendant of the MacDonalds of Glencoe—those “Lords of the Isles” whose stern resistance to arbitrary rule form one of the most thrilling episodes in Scottish history.

The wild picturesqueness of that early home in the heart of Aberdeenshire, its snow-capped peaks, its mountain torrents, its lochs and its firths, its deep ravines, its dreary moors, must all have exerted a strong, moulding influence upon the impressible nature of the dreamy, enthusiastic boy. We can imagine him “going out to meet the spring,” as he himself describes

Hugh, in *David Elginbrod*, and finding in Nature "the grand, pure, tender Mother, ancient in years, yet ever young . . . From the depths of air, from the winds that harp upon the boughs and trumpet upon the great caverns, from the streams, from the flowers, she spoke to him. And he felt that she had a power to heal and to instruct; yea, that she was a power of life, and could speak to the heart and conscience mighty words about God and Truth and Love."

At an early age he entered the University of Aberdeen, and after his graduation he studied for the ministry at Owen's college, Manchester, and at Indiana college, in Highbury, London.

Upon taking holy orders, he became a leader of the "Independents" and preached for some time in the counties of Surrey and Sussex.

In the year 1855, he published his first book, a dramatic poem entitled *Within and Without*, and this was soon followed by *A Hidden Life*. Of these two poems, an able critic says, "We can find nothing in the subsequent writings of MacDonald of which the substance (by which we mean more than the germ) is not to be grasped here." Aside from the fine dramatic passages in *Within and Without*, there are many minor poems incidental to the scenes, such as the sonnet,

"And weep not though the beautiful decay,"

and the sweet child-poem,

"Little white lily sat by a stone,"

that have already become classical.

In 1857, MacDonald travelled on the continent, and visited Algiers before his return home. Possibly to

the bewitching atmosphere of the East, as well as to these months of enforced leisure, is due the fresh kindling of his imagination which bore fruit the following year in his publication of *Phantastes*, that beautiful Faerie Romance which received so many warm encomiums from Dickens. In this wonderful story of the man who went out to seek his ideal, and ended by being glad at having lost his shadow, the symbols are easily interpreted, and the whole allegory is full of dainty touches and fine episodes.

In the interval that followed, before the publication in 1863, of his first novel, *David Elginbrod*, many charming poems and thoughtful essays from the pen of MacDonald occur in the periodical literature of the day. Among the poems may be mentioned *Light*, which reminds one strongly of Wordsworth's *Ode to Immortality*; and *Somnium Mystici*—an exquisite dream picture of the soul laid asleep in the world beyond, awakened for the new life, and trained through successive stages of discipline for the coming of the Son of Man, in whom all beauty and all love are seen to be consummated.

The Portent, published in 1864, is a highly imaginative romance, founded upon the old Scottish belief of the Inner Vision or Second Sight. As a story it is unsatisfactory, but it is an original, masterly production—fulfilling throughout its own natural conditions—and by some critics it is considered MacDonald's best work.

In 1865, *Alec Forbes of Howglen*, was published; and in the two following years, *Adela Cathcart*, *Dealings with the Fairies*, *The Disciple and Other Poems*, and *Unspoken*

Sermons, revealed still more clearly the growing power of a writer whose name was now well known on both sides the water.

When, a few years later, he visited the United States, it was no stranger, but an honored and dearly-loved friend, whom we welcomed to our shores; and the remembrance of his kindly face and "cheerful words" as he spoke to us in church and lecture room comes up vividly before us, as we write.

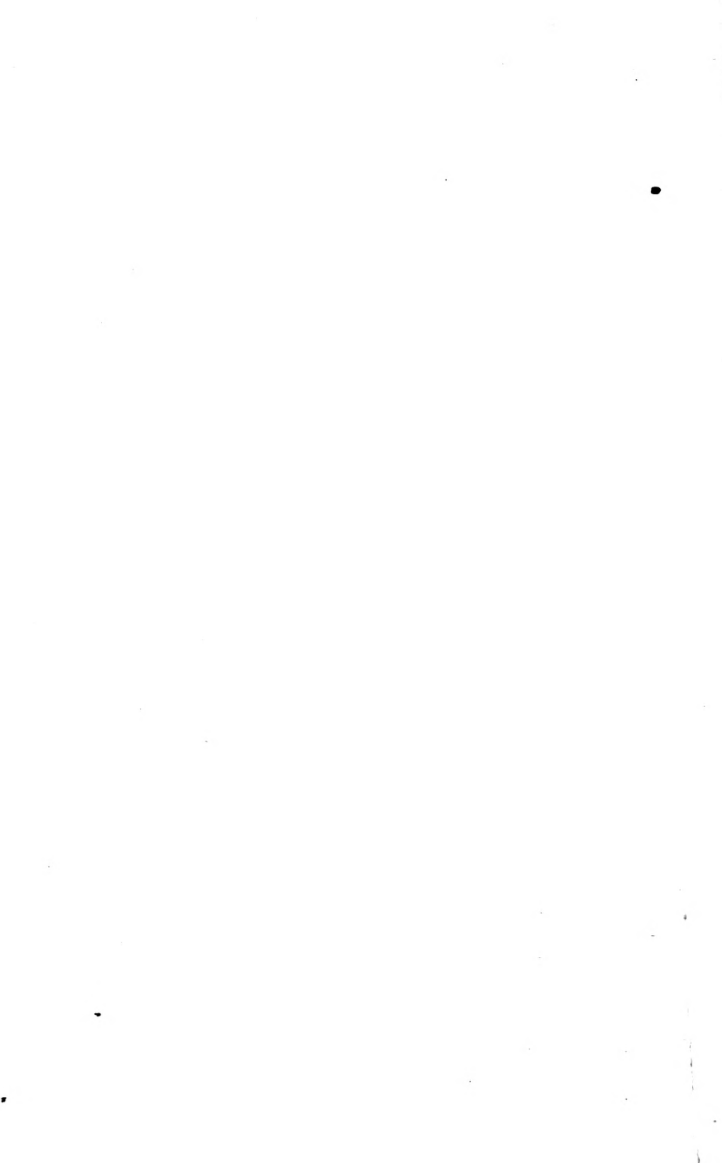
In *Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood*, and its sequel, *The Scaboard Parish*, we begin to realize the intense sympathy of MacDonald, not only with the soul of Nature, but also with the great throbbing heart of humanity.

As some writer has happily expressed it, "Of all life considered as a chain; of its actions and reactions; of life as an ascent of pulsations up to the Divine, MacDonald has an electrical consciousness; and it runs through all his writings. This gives his imagination a buoyancy which permits him to lay burdens on light wings—but they float, and we are deeply impressed, though the brightness of the page is not for a moment dimmed."

The breadth and manliness of tone and sentiment, the deep perceptions of human nature, the originality, fancy, pathos, the fresh out-of-door atmosphere, everywhere apparent—above all, the earnest, wholesome, but always unobtrusive religious teaching, that underlies all his writings, give to the works of George MacDonald a certain magnetic power that is indescribable.

Robert Falconer, published in 1868, is one of the most powerful novels of the nineteenth century ; and yet as we peruse some of the later works of the author, *St. George and St. Michael*, for instance, *Wilfred Cumbermede*, *Malcolm, Marquis of Lossie*, and *Sir Gibbie*, the steady growth of the writer's abilities incline us to think that the best work of George MacDonald is yet to come.

E. E. B.



CHEERFUL WORDS.



I.

WHEN we look towards winter from the last borders of autumn, it seems as if we could not encounter it, and as if it would never go over. So does threatened trouble of any kind seem to us as we look forward upon its miry ways from the last borders of the pleasant greensward on which we have hitherto been walking. But not only do both run their course, but each has its own alleviations, its own pleasures; and very marvelously does the healthy mind fit itself to the new circumstances; while to those who will bravely take up their burden and bear it, asking no more questions than just, "Is this my burden?" a

thousand ministrations of nature and life will come with gentle comfortings. Across a dark, verdureless field will blow a wind through the heart of the winter which will wake in the patient mind not a memory, merely, but a prophecy of the spring, with a glimmer of crocus, or snowdrop, or primrose; and across the waste of tired endeavor will a gentle hope, coming he knows not whence, breathe spring-like upon the heart of the man around whom life looks desolate and dreary.

Well do I remember a friend of mine telling me once—he was then a laborer in the field of literature, who had not yet begun to earn his penny a day, though he worked hard—telling me how once, when a hope that had kept him active for months was suddenly quenched—a book refused on which he had spent a passion of labor—the weight of money that must be paid and could not be had, pressing him down like the coffin-lid that had lately covered the *only* friend to whom he could have applied confidently for aid—telling me, I say, how he stood at the corner of a London street, with the rain dripping black from the brim of his hat, the dreariest of atmospheres about him in the closing afternoon of the city when the rich men were going home and the poor men who worked for them were longing to follow; and how across this waste came energy and hope into his bosom, swelling thenceforth with courage to fight, and

yield no ear to suggested failure. And the story would not be complete—though it is for the fact of the arrival of unexpected and apparently unfounded *hope*, that I tell it—if I did not add, that, in the morning, his wife gave him a letter which their common trouble of yesterday had made her forget, and which had lain with its black border all night in the darkness, unopened, waiting to tell him how the vanished friend had not forgotten him on her death-bed, but had left him enough to take him out of all those difficulties, and give him strength and time to do far better work than the book which had failed of birth. Some of my readers may doubt whether I am more than “a wandering voice,” but whatever I am, or may be thought to be, my friend’s story is true.

II.

How often do we look upon God as our last and feeblest resource! We go to Him because we have nowhere else to go. And then we learn that the storms of life have driven us, not upon the rocks, but into the desired haven: that we have been compelled, as to the last remaining, so to the best, the only, the central help, the causing cause of all the helps to which we had turned aside as nearer and better.

III.

If we only act as God would have us, other considerations may look after themselves — or, rather He will look after them. The world will never be right till the mind of God is the measure of things, and the will of God the law of things. In the kingdom of Heaven nothing else is acknowledged. And till that kingdom come, the mind and will of God must, with those that look for that kingdom, override every other way of thinking, feeling and judging.

IV.

Having reached the river in the course of my wandering, I came down the side of it, loitering and looking, quiet in heart and soul and mind, because I had committed my cares to Him who careth for us. The earth was round me — I was rooted, as it were, in it, but the air of a higher life was about me. I was swayed to and fro by the motions of a spiritual power; feelings and desires and hopes passed through me, passed away and returned; and still my head rose into the truth, and the will of God was the regnant sunlight upon it. I might change my place and condition; new feelings might come forth, and old feelings retire into the lonely corners of my being; but still my heart should be glad and strong in the one

changeless thing, in the truth that maketh free ; still my head should rise into the sunlight of God, and I should know that because He lived I should live also, and because He was true I should remain true also, nor should any change pass upon me that should make me mourn the decadence of humanity. And then I found that I was gazing over the stump of an old pollard, on which I was leaning, down on a great bed of white water lilies, that lay in the broad slow river, here broader and slower than in most places. The slanting yellow sunlight shone through the water down to the very roots anchored in the soil, and the water swathed their stems with coolness and freshness, and a universal sense, I doubt not, of watery presence and nurture. And there on their lovely heads, as they lay on the pillow of the water, shone the life-giving light of the summer sun, filling all the spaces between their outspread petals of living silver with its sea of radiance, and making them gleam with the whiteness which was born of them and the sun.

V.

It has been well said that no man ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when to-morrow's burden is added to the burden of to-day, that the weight is more than a man can bear. Never load yourselves so, my friends. If you find yourselves so loaded, at

least remember this: it is your doings, not God's. He begs you to leave the future to Him, and mind the present. What more or what else could He do to take the burden off you? Nothing else would do it. Money in the bank wouldn't do it; He cannot do to-morrow's business for you beforehand to save you from fear about it. That would derange everything. What else is there but to tell you to trust in Him, irrespective of the fact that nothing else but such trust can put our heart at peace, from the very nature of our relation to Him, as well as the fact that we need these things. We think that we come nearer to God than the lower animals do by our foresight. But there is another side to it. We are like to Him with whom there is no past or future, with whom a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, when we live with large bright spiritual eyes, doing our work in the great present, leaving both past and future to Him to whom they are ever present, and fearing nothing, because He is in our future, as much as He is in our past, as much as, and far more than, we can feel Him to be in our present. Partakers thus of the divine nature, resting in that perfect All-in-all in whom our nature is eternal too, we walk without fear, full of hope, and courage, and strength to do His will, waiting for the endless good which He is always giving, as fast as He can get us able to take it in. Would not this be to be more of gods than Satan promised to

Eve? To live carelessly divine, duty-doing, fearless, loving, self-forgetting lives — is not that more than to know both good and evil — lives in which the good, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up the evil, and turned it into good? For pain and hunger are evils; but if faith in God swallows them up, do they not so turn into good?

VI. .

"No doubt," resumed Old Rogers, "King Solomon was quite right, as he always was, I suppose, in what he *said*, for his wisdom mun ha' laid mostly in the tongue — right, I say, when he said, 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth;' but I can't help thinking there's another side to it. I think it would be as good advice to a man on the other tack, whose boasting lay far to windward, and he close on a lee-shore wi' breakers — it wouldn't be amiss to say to him, 'Don't strike your colors to the morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' There's just as many good days as bad ones; as much fair weather as foul in the days to come. And if a man keeps up heart, he's all the better for that, and none the worse when the evil day does come. But God forgive me! I'm talking like a heathen. As if there was any chance about what the days would bring forth. No, my lad," said the old sailor, assuming the dignity of his superior years under the inspiration

of the truth, "boast nor trust nor hope in the morrow. Boast and trust and hope in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him, who is the health of thy countenance and thy God."

VII.

Janet sat — knitting busily, and praying with countenance untroubled, amidst the rush of the seaward torrents, the mad howling and screeching of the wind, and the lowing of the imprisoned cattle.

"Oh, Lord," she said in her great trusting heart, "gien my bonny man be droonin i' the water, or deein' o' cauld on the hillside, haud 's han'. Binna far frae him, O Lord ; dinna let him be fleyt."

To Janet, what we call life and death were comparatively small matters, but she was very tender over suffering and fear. She did not pray half so much for Gibbie's life, as for the presence with him of Him who is at the death-bed of every sparrow. She went on waiting, and refused to be troubled. True, she was not his bodily mother, but she loved him far better than the mother who, in such dread for her child, would have been mad with terror. The difference was, that Janet loved up as well as down, loved down so widely, so intensely, *because* the Lord of life, who gives his own to us, was more to her than any child can be to any mother, and she knew he could not forsake her Gibbie, and that his presence was more and better than life.

She was unnatural, was she?—inhuman? Yes, if there be no such heart and source of humanity as she believed in; if there be, then such calmness and courage and content as hers, are the mere human and natural condition to be hungered after by every aspiring soul. Not until such condition is mine shall I be able to regard life as a godlike gift, except in the hope that it is drawing nigh. Let him who understands, understand better; let him not say the good is less than perfect, or excuse his supineness and spiritual sloth by saying to himself that a man can go too far in his search after the divine, can sell too much of what he has, to buy the field of the treasure. Either there is no Christ of God, or my all is His.

VIII.

A perfect faith would lift us absolutely above fear. It is in the cracks, crannies, and gulfy faults of our belief, the gaps that are not faith, that the snow of apprehension settles, and the ice of unkindness forms.

IX.

It may be good for you to go hungry and barefoot; but it must be utter death to have no faith in God. It is not, however, in God's way of things that the man who does his work shall not live by it. We do

not know why here and there a man may be left to die of hunger, but I do believe that they who wait upon the Lord shall not lack any good. What it may be good to deprive a man of till he knows and acknowledges whence it comes, it may be still better to give him when he has learned that every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.

X.

You have a disagreeable duty to do at twelve o'clock. Do not blacken nine and ten and eleven, and all between, with the color of twelve. Do the work of each, and reap your reward in peace. So when the dreaded moment in the future becomes the present, you shall meet it walking in the light, and that light will overcome its darkness. How often do men who have made up their minds what to say and do under certain expected circumstances, forget the words and reverse the actions! The best preparation is the present well seen to, the last duty done. For this will keep the eye so clear and the body so full of light that the right action will be perceived at once, the right words will rush from the heart to the lips, and the man, full of the Spirit of God because he cares for nothing but the will of God, will trample on the evil thing in love, and be sent, it may be, in a chariot of fire to the

presence of his Father, or stand unmoved amid the cruel mockings of the men he loves.

XI.

I *should* like to know a man who just minded his duty and troubled himself about nothing; who did his own work and did not interfere with God's. How nobly he would work—working not for reward, but because it was the will of God! How happily he would receive his food and clothing, receiving them as the gifts of God! What peace would be his! What a sober gayety! How hearty and infectious his laughter! What a friend he would be! How sweet his sympathy! And his mind would be so clear he would understand everything. His eye being single, his whole body would be full of light. No fear of his ever doing a mean thing. He would die in a ditch rather. It is this fear of want that makes men do mean things. They are afraid to part with their precious lord—mammôn. He gives no safety against such a fear. One of the richest men in England is haunted with the dread of the work-house. This man whom I should like to know, would be sure that God would have him liberal, and he would be what God would have him. Riches are not in the least necessary to that. Witness our Lord's admiration of the poor widow with her great farthing.

XII.

No man can order his life, for it comes flowing over him from behind. But if it lay before us, and we could watch its current approaching from a long distance, what could we do with it before it had reached the now? In like wise a man thinks foolishly who imagines he could have done this and that with his own character and development, if he had but known this and that in time. Were he as good as he thinks himself wise, he could but at best have produced a fine cameo in very low relief: with a work in the round, which he is meant to be, he could have done nothing. The one secret of life and development, is not to devise and plan, but to fall in with the forces at work — to do every moment's duty aright — that being the part in the process allotted to us; and let come — not what will for there is no such thing — but what the eternal Thought wills for each of us, has intended in each of us from the first. If men would but believe that they are in process of creation, and consent to be made — let their Maker handle them as the potter his clay, yielding themselves in respondent motion and submissive hopeful action with the turning of his wheel, they would ere long find themselves able to welcome every pressure of that hand upon them, even when it was felt in pain, and sometimes not only to believe but to recognize the divine end in view, the bringing of a son

into glory : whereas, behaving like children who struggle and scream while their mother washes and dresses them, they find they have to be washed and dressed, notwithstanding, and with the more discomfort ; they may even have to find themselves set half naked and but half dried in a corner, to come to their right minds, and ask to be finished.

XIII.

“It’s right to trust in God ; but if you don’t stand to your halliards, your craft’ll miss stays, and your faith’ll be blown out of the bolt-ropes in the turn of a marlinspike.”

XIV.

How is the work of the world to be done if we take no thought ? We are nowhere told not to take thought. We *must* take thought. The question is — What are we to take or not to take thought about ? By some who do not know God, little work would be done if they were not driven by anxiety of some kind. But you, friends, are you content to go with the nations of the earth, or do you seek a better way — *the* way that the Father of nations would have you walk in ?

What, then, are we to take thought about ? Why, about our work. What are we not to take thought

about? Why, about our life. The one is our business: the other is God's. But you turn it the other way. You take no thought of earnestness about the doing of your duty; but you take thought of care lest God should not fulfill His part in the goings on of the world. A man's business is just to do his duty: God takes upon Himself the feeding and the clothing. Will the work of the world be neglected if a man thinks of his work, his duty, God's will to be done, instead of what he is to eat, what he is to drink, and wherewithal he is to be clothed? And remember, all the needs of the world come back to these three. You will allow, I think, that the work of the world will be only so much the better done; that the very means of procuring the raiment or the food will be the more with Him. Hence the quiet fullness of ordinary nature; hence the Spirit to them that ask it.

XV.

CONSIDER THE RAVENS.

(A very old hymn.)

Lord, according to Thy words,
I have considered Thy birds;
And I find their life good,
And better the better understood;
Sowing neither corn nor wheat,
They have all that they can eat;
Reaping no more than they sow,
They have all they can stow;

Having neither barn nor store,
Hungry again, they eat more.

Considering, I see too that they
Have a busy life, and plenty of play ;
In the earth they dig their bills deep,
And work well though they do not heap ;
Then to play in the air they are not loath,
And their nests between are better than both.

But this is when there blow no storms,
When berries are plenty in winter, and worms ;
When their feathers are thick, and oil is enough
To keep the cold out and the rain off.
If there should come a long hard frost,
Then it looks as Thy birds were lost.

But I consider further and find
A hungry bird has a free mind ;
He is hungry to-day, not to-morrow ;
Steals no comfort, no grief doth borrow ;
This moment is his, Thy will hath said it,
The next is nothing till Thou hast made it.

The bird has pain, but has no fear,
Which is the worst of any gear ;
When cold and hunger and harm betide him,
He gathers them not, to stuff inside him ;
Content with the day's ill he has got,
He waits just, nor haggles with his lot ;
Neither jumbles God's will
With driblets from his own still.

But next I see in my endeavor,
Thy birds here do not live forever;
That cold or hunger, sickness or age.
Finishes their earthly stage;
The rook drops without a stroke,
And never gives another croak;
Birds lie here, and birds lie there,
With little feathers all astare;
And in Thy own sermon, Thou
That the sparrow falls, dost allow.

It shall not cause me any alarm,
For neither so comes the bird to harm,
Seeing our Father, Thou hast said,
Is by the sparrow's dying bed.
Therefore it is a blessed place,
And the sparrow in high grace.

It cometh therefore to this, Lord :
I have considered Thy word,
And henceforth will be Thy bird.

XVI.

If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God. He is in no haste ; and if I do what I may in earnest, I need not mourn if I work no great work on the earth. Let God make His sunsets : I will mottle my little fading cloud. To help the growth of a thought that struggles towards the light ; to brush with gentle

hand the earth-stain from the white of one snowdrop — such be my ambition! So shall I scale the rocks in front, not leave my name carved upon those behind me.

XVII.

Whatever is capable of aspiring, must be troubled that it may wake and aspire — then troubled still, that it may hold fast, be itself, and aspire still.

XVIII.

If any one judge it hard that men should be made with ambitions to whose objects they can never attain, I answer, ambition is but the evil shadow of aspiration; and no man ever followed the truth, which is the one path of aspiration, and in the end complained that he had been made this way or that. Man is made to be that which he is made most capable of desiring — but it goes without saying that he must desire the thing itself and not its shadow. Man is of the truth, and while he follows a lie, no indication his nature yields will hold, except the fear, the discontent, the sickness of soul, that tell him he is wrong. If he say: "I care not for what you call the substance — it is to me the shadow; I want what you call the shadow," the only answer is, that to all eternity he can never have it; a shadow can never be had.

XIX.

I doubt whether there is a single history — if one could only get at the whole of it — in which there is not a considerable admixture of the unlikely, become fact, including a few strange coincidences ; of the uncommon which, although striking at first, has grown common from familiarity with its presence as our own ; with even, at least, some one more or less rosy touch of what we call the romantic. My own conviction is that the poetry is far the deepest in us, and that the prose is only broken down poetry ; and likewise that to this our lives correspond. The poetic region is the true one, and just, therefore, the incredible one to the lower order of mind ; for although every mind is capable of the truth, or rather capable of becoming capable of the truth, there may lie ages between its capacity and the truth. As you will hear some people read poetry so that no mortal could tell it was poetry, so do some people read their own lives and those of others.

XX.

The highest poetic feeling of which we are now conscious, springs not from the beholding of perfected beauty, but from the mute sympathy which the creation with all its children manifests with us in the groaning and travailing which look for the sonship. Because of

our need and aspiration, the snowdrop gives birth in our hearts to a loftier spiritual and poetic feeling than the rose most complete in form, color, and odor. The rose is of paradise ; the snowdrop is of the striving, hoping, longing earth. Perhaps our highest poetry is the expression of our aspirations in the sympathetic forms of visible nature. Nor is this merely a longing for a restored paradise ; for then in the ordinary history of men, no man or woman that has fallen can be restored to the position formerly held. Such must rise to a yet higher place, whence they can behold their former standing far beneath their feet. They must be restored by the attainment of something better than they ever possessed before or not at all. If the law be a weariness, we must escape it by taking refuge with the spirit, for not otherwise can we fulfill the law than by being above the law. To escape the overhanging rocks of Sinai, we must climb to its secret top.

“ Is thy strait horizon dreary,
Is thy foolish fancy chill ?
Change the feet that have grown weary,
For the wings that never will.”

XXI.

The frost is hard upon old people, and the spring is so much the more genial and blessed in its sweet influ-

ences on them. Do we grow old that, in our weakness and loss of physical self-assertion, we may learn the benignities of the universe — only to be learned first through the feeling of their want? I do not envy the man who laughs the east wind to scorn. He can never know the balmy power of its sister of the West, which is the breath of the Lord, the symbol of the one *genial* strength at the root of all life, resurrection, and growth — commonly called the Spirit of God. Who has not seen, as the infirmities of age grow upon old men, the haughty, self-reliant spirit that had neglected, if not despised, the gentle ministration of love, grow, as it were, a little scared, and begin to look about for some kindness; begin to return the warm pressure of the hand, and to submit to be waited upon by the anxiety of love? Not in weakness alone comes the second childhood upon men, but often in childlikeness: for in old age, as in nature,

Old autumn's fingers
Paint in hues of spring.

XXII.

“People don't care about a bag of old bones when they can get hold of young men. Well, well, never mind, old woman. The Lord'll take us through some how. When the wind blows, the ship goes: when the

wind drops, the ship stops ; but the sea is His all the same, for He made it ; and the wind is His all the same too."

XXIII.

Age is such a different thing in different natures ! One man seems to grow more and more selfish as he grows older ; and in another the slow fire of time seems only to consume, with fine, imperceptible gradations, the yet lingering selfishness in him, letting the light of the kingdom, which the Lord says is within, shine out more and more, as the husk grows thin and is ready to fall off, that the man, like the seed sown, may pierce the earth of this world, and rise into the pure air and wind and dew of the second life. The face of a loving old man is always to me like a morning moon, reflecting the yet unrisen sun of the other world, yet fading before its approaching light, until, when it does rise, it pales and withers away from our gaze, absorbed in the source of its own beauty.

XXIV.

Let any one tell me something that has happened to himself, especially if he will give me a peep into how his heart took it, as it sat in its own little room with the closed door, and that person will, so telling, absorb

my attention ; he has something true and genuine and valuable to communicate. They are mostly old people that can do so. Not that young people have nothing happen to them, but that only when they grow old, are they able to see things right, to disentangle confusions, and judge righteous judgment. Things which at the time appeared insignificant or wearisome, then give out the light that was in them, show their own truth, interest, and influence ; they are far enough off to be seen. It is not when we are nearest to anything that we know best what it is.

XXV.

AUTUMN SONG.

Autumn clouds are flying, flying,

O'er the waste of blue.

Summer flowers are dying, dying,

Late so lovely new.

Laboring trains are slowly rolling

Home with winter grain ;

Holy bells are slowly tolling

Over buried men.

Goldener lights set noon a sleeping

Like an afternoon ;

Colder airs come stealing, creeping

After sun and moon ;

And the leaves all tired of blowing,
Cloud-like o'er the sun,
Change to sunset colors, knowing
That their day is done.

Autumn's sun is sinking, sinking
Into winter's night ;
And our hearts are thinking, thinking
Of the cold and blight.
Our life's sun is slowly going.
Down the hill of night ;
Will our clouds shine golden-glowing
On the slope of night.

But the vanished corn is lying
In rich golden glooms.
In the churchyard all the sighing
Is above the tombs.
Spring will come, slow-lingering
Opening buds of faith.
Man goes forth to meet his spring
Through the door of death.

So we love with no less loving,
Hair that turns to gray ;
Or a step less lightly moving,
In life's autumn day.
And if thought, still-brooding, lingers
O'er each bygone thing,
'Tis because old autumn's fingers
Paint in hues of spring.

XXVI.

The necessities of the old man prefigure and forerun the dawn of the immortal childhood. For is not our necessity towards God our highest blessedness — the fair cloud that hangs over the summit of existence? Thank God, He has made His children so noble and high that they cannot do without Him! I believe we are sent into this world just to find this out.

XXVII.

The day was one of God's odes — written for men. Would that the days of our human autumn were as calmly grand, as gorgeously hopeful as the days that lead the aging year down to the grave of winter! If our white hairs were sunlit from behind like those radiance-bordered clouds; if our air were as pure as this when it must be as cold; if the falling at last of longest-cherished hopes did but, like that of the forest leaves, let in more of the sky, more of the infinite possibilities of the region of truth which is the matrix of fact, we should go marching down the hill of life like a battered but still bannered army on its way home. But alas! how often we rot, instead of march, towards the grave! If the year was dying, it was dying at least with dignity. The sun was still revelling in the gift of himself. A thin blue mist went up to greet him, like the

first of the smoke from the altars of the morning. The fields lay yellow below ; the rich colors of decay hung heavy on the woods, and seemed to clothe them as with the trappings of a majestic sorrow ; but the spider-webs sparkled with dew, and the gossamer films floated thick in the level sunbeams. It was a great time for the spiders, those visible deaths of the insect race. The sun, like a householder leaving his house for a time, was burning up a thousand outworn things before he went : hence the smoke of the dying hearth of summer was going up to the heavens ; but there was a heart of hope left, for, when farthest away, the sun is never gone, and the snow is the earth's blanket against the frost.

XXVIII.

"I'm growin' terrible auld, Janet," said Robert. "It's a sair thing this auld age, an' I canna bring mysel' content wi' 't. Ye see I haena been used till 't."

"That's true, Robert," answered Janet. "Gien we had been born auld, we micht by this time hae been at hame wi't. But syne what wad hae come o' the gran' delight o' seein' auld age rin hirplin awa' frae the face o' the Auncient o' Days?"

"I wad fain be contentit wi' my lot, though," persisted Robert ; "but whan I fin' mysel' sae helpless like, I canna get it oot o' my heid 'at the Lord has forsaken me, an' left me to mak'an ill best o' 't wantin' Him."

“I wadna lat sic a thought come intil my heid, Robert, sae lang as I kenned I cudna draw breath nor wag tongue wantin’ Him, for in Him we leeve an’ muv an’ hae oor bein.’ Gien He be the life o’ me, what for sud I tribble mysel’ aboot that life ? ”

XXIX.

Few sights can be lovelier than that of a man who having rushed up the staircase of fame in his youth—what matter whether the fame of a paltry world, or of a paltry sect of that world—comes slowly, gently, graciously down in his old age, content to lose that which he never had, and careful only to be honest at last.

XXX.

The world seemed a grand march of resurrection—out of every sorrow springing the joy at its heart, without which it could not have been a sorrow ; out of the troubles, and evils, and sufferings, and cruelties that clouded its history, ever rising the human race, the sons of God, redeemed in Him who had been made subject to death that He might conquer death for them and for His Father—a succession of mighty facts, whose meanings only God can evolve, only the obedient heart behold.

XXXI.

I admit that the best things are the commonest, but the highest types and the best combinations of them are the rarest. There is more love in the world than anything else, for instance ; but the best love, and the individual in whom love is supreme, are the rarest of all things. That for which humanity has the strongest claim upon its workmen is the representation of its own best ; but the loudest demand of the present day is for the representation of that grade of humanity of which men see the most — that type of things which could never have been but that it might pass. The demand marks the commonness, narrowness, low-levelled satisfaction of the age. It loves its own — not that which might be, and ought to be its own — not its better self, infinitely higher than its present, for the sake of whose approach it exists. I do not think that the age is worse in this respect than those which have preceded it, but that vulgarity, and a certain vile contentment swelling to self admiration, have become more vocal than hitherto ; just as unbelief, which I think in reality less prevailing than in former ages, has become largely more articulate, and thereby more loud and peremptory. But whatever the demand of the age, I insist that that which *ought* to be presented to its beholding, is the common good uncommonly developed, and that not because of its rarity, but because it is truer

to humanity. Shall I admit those conditions, those facts, to be true exponents of *humanity*, which, except they be changed, purified, or abandoned, must soon cause that humanity to cease from its very name, must destroy its very being? To make the admission would be to assert that a house may be divided against itself, and yet stand. It is the noble, not the failure from the noble, that is the true human; and if I must show the failure, let it ever be with an eye to the final possible, yea, imperative, success.

XXXII.

Each house is a nest of human birds, over which brood the eternal wings of love and purpose. Only such different birds are hatched from the same nest! And what a nest was then the city itself, with its university, its schools, its churches, its hospitals, its missions; its homes, its lodging-houses, its hotels, its drinking shops, its houses viler still; its factories, its ships, its great steamers, and the same humanity busy in all — here the sickly lady walking in the panoply of love, unharmed through the horrors of vicious suffering; there the strong mother cursing her own child along half a street with an intensity and vileness of execration unheard elsewhere! The will of the brooding spirit must be a grand one, indeed, to enclose so much of what cannot be its will, and turn all to its purpose of eternal good!

Our knowledge of humanity, how much more our knowledge of the Father of it, is moving as yet but in the first elements.

XXXIII.

To Polwarth a human self was a shrine to be approached with reverence, even when he bore deliverance in his hand. Anywhere, everywhere, in the seventh heaven or the seventh hell, he could worship God with the outstretched arms of love, the bended knees of joyous adoration, but in helping his fellow he not only worshipped but served God — ministered, that is, to the wants of God, doing it unto Him in the least of His. He knew that, as the Father unresting works for the weal of men, so every son following the Master-Son, must work also. Through weakness and suffering he had learned it. But he never doubted that his work as much as his bread would be given him, never rushed out wildly snatching at something to do for God, never helped a lazy man to break stones, never preached to foxes. It was what the Father gave him to do that he cared to do, and that only. It was the man next him that he helped — the neighbor in need of the help he had. He did not trouble himself greatly about the happiness of men, but when the time and the opportunity arrived in which to aid the struggling birth of the eternal bliss, the whole strength of his being responded to the call. And now, having felt

a thread vibrate, like a sacred spider he sat in the centre of his web of love, and waited and watched. In proportion as the love is pure, and only in proportion to that, can such be a pure and real calling. The least speck of self will defile it ; a little more may ruin its most hopeful effort.

XXXIV.

The highest nature is the one that has the most necessities, but the fewest of its own making. He is not the greatest man who is the most independent, but he who thirsts most after a conscious harmony with every element and portion of the mighty whole ; demands from every region thereof its influences to perfect his individuality ; regards that individuality as his kingdom, his treasure, not to hold but to give : sees in his self the one thing he can devote, the one precious means of freedom by its sacrifice, and that in no contempt or scorn, but in love to God and his children, the multitudes of his kind. By dying ever thus, ever thus losing his soul, he lives like God, and God knows him, and he knows God. This is too good to be grasped, but not too good to be true. The highest is that which needs the highest, the largest that which needs the most ; the finest and strongest that which to live must breathe essential life, self-willed life, God himself. It follows that it is not the largest or the strongest nature

that will feel a loss the least. An ant will not gather a grain of corn the less that his mother is dead, while a boy will turn from his books and his play and his dinner because his bird is dead; is the ant therefore the stronger nature?

XXXV.

When a man turns to look at himself, that moment the glow of the loftiest bliss begins to fade; the pulsing fireflies throb paler in the passionate night; an unseen vapor steams up from the marsh, and dims the star-crowded sky and the azure sea; and the next moment the very bliss itself looks as if it had never been more than a phosphorescent gleam — the summer lightning of the brain. For then the man sees himself but in his own dim mirror, whereas ere he turned to look in that, he knew himself in the absolute clarity of God's present thought outbodying him. The shocks of glad consciousness that come to the obedient man, surpass in bliss whole days and years of such ravined rapture as he gains, whose weariness is ever spurring the sides of his intent towards the ever retreating goal of his desires. I am a traitor even to myself if I would live without my life. But I withhold my pen; for vain were the fancy, by treatise, or sermon, or poem, or tale, to persuade a man to forget himself. He cannot if he would. Sooner will he forget the pres-

ence of a raging tooth. There is no forgetting of ourselves but in the finding of our deeper, our truer self — God's idea of us when He devised us — the Christ in us. Nothing but that self can displace the false, greedy, whining self, of which most of us are so fond and proud. And that self no man can find for himself; seeing of himself he does not know even what to search for. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

XXXVI.

When Mrs. Sclater went to bed that night she lay awake a good while thinking, and her main thought was, what could be the nature of the peculiar feeling which the stare of the boy had roused in her? Nor was it long before she began to suspect that, unlike her hand beside his, she showed to some kind of disadvantage beside the shepherd lad. Was it dissatisfaction then with herself that his look had waked? She was aware of nothing in which she had failed, or been in the wrong of late. She never did anything to be called wrong — by herself, that is, or indeed by her neighbors. She had never done anything *very* wrong, she thought; and anything wrong she had done, was now so far away and so nearly forgotten, that it seemed to have left her almost quite innocent; yet the look of those blue eyes, searching, searching, without seeming

to know it, made her feel something like the discomfort of a dream of expected visitors, with her house not quite in a condition to receive them. She must see to her hidden house. She must take dust-pan and broom and go about a little. For there are purifications in which king and cow-boy must each serve himself. The things that come out of a man are they that defile him, and to get rid of them, a man must go into himself, be a convict, and scrub the floor of his cell. Mrs. Sclater's cell was very tidy and respectable for a cell, but no human consciousness can be *clean*, until it lies wide open to the eternal sun, and the all-potent wind ; until, from a dim-lighted cellar, it becomes a mountain-top.

XXXVII.

Brothers, sisters ! do I not know your hearts from my own ? — sick hearts which nothing can restore to health and joy but the presence of Him who is father and mother both in one. Sunshine is not gladness, because you see Him not. The stars are far away, because He is not near ; and the flowers, the smiles of old earth do not make you smile, because, although thank God ! you cannot get rid of the child's need, you have forgotten what it is the need of. The winter is dreary and dull, because, although you have the homeliest of homes, the warmest of shelters, the safest of nests to creep into and rest — though the

most cheerful of fires is blazing for you, and a table is spread, waiting to refresh your frozen and weary hearts—you have forgotten the way thither, and will not be troubled to ask the way; you shiver with the cold and hunger, rather than arise and say, “I will go to my Father;” you will die in the storm, rather than fight the storm; you will lie down in the snow rather than tread it under foot. The heart within you cries out for something, and you let it cry. It is crying for its God—for its father and mother and home. And all the world will look dull and gray—and if it does not look so now, the day will come when it must look so—till your heart is satisfied and quieted with the known presence of Him “in whom we live and move and have our being.”

XXXVII.

LIFE'S JOURNEY.

“Traveller, what lies over the hill?

Traveller tell to me;

I am only a child—from the window-sill,

Over I cannot see.”

“Child, there’s a valley over there,

Pretty and woody and shy :

And a little brook that says —‘Take care,

Or I’ll drown you by and by.’”

“And what comes next?”—“A lonely moor,
Without a beaten way;
And gray clouds sailing slow, before
A wind that will not stay.”

“And then?” “Dark rocks and yellow sand,
And a moaning sea beside.”

“And then?” —“More sea, more sea, more land,
And rivers deep and wide.”

“And then?” —“Oh ! rock and mountain and vale
Rivers and fields and men :
Over and over — a weary tale —
And round to your home again.”

“Is that the end? It is weary at best.”

“No child; it is not the end.
On summer eves, away in the west,
You will see a stair ascend ;

“Built of all colors of lovely stones —
A stair up into the sky;
Where no one is weary, and no one moans.
Or wants to be laid by.”

“I will go !” —“But the steps are very steep ;
If you would climb up there,
You must lie at its foot, as still as sleep,
And be a step of the stair.

“For others to put their feet on you,
To reach the stones high-piled ;
Till Jesus comes and takes you, too,
And leads you up, my child !”

XXXIX.

The twilight had deepened, merging into such night as the summer in that part of Scotland knows — a sweet, pale memory of the past day. The sky was full of sparkles of pale gold in a fathomless blue ; there was no moon ; the darker sea lay quiet below, with only a murmur about its lip, and fitfully reflected the stars. The soft wind kept softly blowing. A light shone at the harbor's mouth, and a twinkling was here and there visible in the town above ; but all was as if there were no life save in the wind and the sea and the stars. The whole feeling was as if something had been finished in heaven, and the outmost ripples of the following rest, had overflowed, and were now pulsing faintly and dreamily across the bosom of the laboring earth, with feeblest suggestion of the mighty peace beyond. Alas, words can do so little ! even such a night is infinite.

XL.

How still the night was ! My soul hung, as it were suspended in stillness ; for the whole sphere of heaven seemed to be about me, the stars above shining as clear below in the mirror of the all but motionless water. It was a pure type of the “rest that remaineth” — rest, the one immovable centre wherein lie all the

stories of might, whence issue all forces, all influences of making and moulding. "And, indeed," I said to myself, "after all the noise, uproar, and strife that there is on the earth, after all the tempests, earthquakes, and volcanic outbursts, there is yet more of peace than of tumult in the world. How many nights like this glide away in loveliness when deep sleep hath fallen upon men and they know neither how still their own repose, nor how beautiful the sleep of nature. Ah, what must the stillness of the kingdom be? When the heavenly day's work is done, with what a gentle wing will the night come down! But I bethink me, the rest there, as here, will be the presence of God; and if we have Him with us, the battle-field itself will be—if not quiet, yet as full of peace as this night of stars."

XLI.

There is great power in quiet, for God is in it. Not seldom he seems to lay His hand on one of His children, as a mother lays hers on the restless one in his crib to still him. Then the child sleeps, but the man begins to live up from the lower depths of his nature. So the winter comes to still the plant whose life has been rushing to blossom and fruit. When the hand of God is laid upon a man, vain moan and struggle and complaint, it may be indignant outcry follows; but when, outwearied, at last he yields, if it be but in

dull submission to the inexorable, and is still, then the God at the heart of him, the God that is there, or the man could not be, begins to grow.

XLII.

With the new light came new promise and fresh hope. What should we poor humans do without our God's nights and mornings? Our ills are all easier to help than we know — except the one ill of a central self, which God himself finds it hard to help.

XLIII.

All reading of the Book is not reading of the Word. "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first." I know *now* that it was Jesus Christ and not theology that filled the hearts of the men that wrote those Epistles — Jesus Christ, the living God-man whom I found — not in the Epistles, but in the Gospels. The Gospels contain what the apostles preached — the Epistles what they wrote after the preaching. And until we understand the Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ our brother-king — until we understand Him, until we have His Spirit, promised so freely to them that ask it — all the Epistles, the words of men who were full of Him, and wrote out of that fullness, who loved Him so utterly that by that very love they were lifted into the air of

pure reason and right and would die for Him, and did die for Him, without two thoughts about it, in the very simplicity of *no choice* — the letters, I say, of such men are to us a sealed book. Until we love the Lord so as to do what He tells us, we have no right to have an opinion about what one of those men meant ; for all they wrote is about things beyond us. The simplest woman who tries not to judge her neighbor, or not to be anxious for the morrow, will better know what is best to know, than the best-read bishop without the one simple out-going of his highest nature in the effort to do the will of Him who thus spoke.

XLIV.

I never could believe that a man who did not find God in other places as well as in the Bible, ever found Him there at all. And I always thought, that to find God in other books, enabled us to see clearly that he was *more* in the Bible than in any other book, or all other books put together.

XLV.

It will not do any man good to fling even the Bible in his face. Nay, a roll of bank-notes, which would be more evidently a good to most men, would carry insult with it, if presented in that manner. You cannot

expect people to accept before they have had a chance of seeing what the offered gift really is.

XLVI.

The clergyman must never be a partisan. When our Lord was requested to act as umpire between two brothers He refused. But He spoke and said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." Now, though the best of men is unworthy to loose the latchet of His shoe, yet the servant must be as his Master. Ah me! while I write it, I remember that the sinful woman might yet do as she would with His sacred feet. I bethink me: Desert may not touch His shoe-tie: Love may kiss His feet.

XLVII.

I have never been able to see the very great difference between right and wrong in a clergyman, and right and wrong in another man. All that I can pretend to have yet discovered comes to this: that what is right in another man is right in a clergyman; and what is wrong in another man is much worse in a clergyman.

XLVIII.

"I'm an old salt—an old man-o'-war's man—

and I've been all round the world, sir ;" said Old Rogers, "and I ha' been in all sorts o' company, pirates and all, sir ; and I ain't a bit frightened of a parson. No, I love a parson, sir. And I'll tell you for why, sir. He's got a good telescope, and he gits to the masthead, and he looks out. And he sings out, 'Land ahead!' or "Breakers ahead!" and he gives directions accordin'. Only I can't always make out what he says. But when he shuts up his spy-glass, and comes down the riggin' and talks to us like one man to another, then I don't know what I should do without the parson."

XLIX.

All through the slowly-fading afternoon, the autumn of the day, when the colors are richest and the shadows long and lengthening, I paced my solemn old-thoughted church. Sometimes I went up into the pulpit and sat there, looking on the ancient walls which had grown up under men's hands, that men might be helped to pray by the visible symbol of unity which the walls gave, and that the voice of the Spirit of God might be heard exhorting men to forsake the evil and choose the good. And I thought how many witnesses to the truth had knelt in those ancient pews. For as the great church is made up of numberless communities, so is the great shining orb of witness-bearers made

up of millions of lesser orbs. All men and women of true heart bear individual testimony to the truth of God, saying, "I have trusted and found Him faithful." And the feeble light of the glowworm is yet light, pure, and good, and with a loveliness of its own. "So, O Lord," I said, "let my light shine before men." And I felt no fear of vanity in such a prayer, for I knew that the glory to come of it is to God only — "that men may glorify their Father in heaven."

L.

The parson of a parish must be content to keep the upper windows of his mind open to the holy winds and the pure lights of heaven; and the side windows of tone, of speech, of behavior, open to the earth, to let forth upon his fellow-men the tenderness and truth which those upper influences bring forth in any reason exposed to their operation. Believing in his Master, such a servant shall not make haste; shall feel no feverous desire to behold the work of his hands; shall be content to be as his Master, who waiteth long for the fruits of His earth.

LI.

If there be a living God, who is doing all He can to save men, to make them pure and noble and high,

humble and loving and true, to make them live the life He cares to live Himself ; if He has revealed and is revealing this to men, and needs for His purpose the work of their fellow-men, who have already seen and known this purpose — surely there is no nobler office than that of a parson ; for to him is committed the grand work of letting men see the thought of God, and the work of God — in a word of telling the story of Jesus, so that men shall see how true it is for *now*, how beautiful it is for *ever* ; and recognize it as in fact, *the* story of God.

LII.

Coming to a lane leading down to the river, I followed it, and then walked up a path outside the row of pollards, through a lovely meadow, where brown and white cows were eating, and shining all over the thick, deep grass. Beyond the meadow, a wood on the side of a rising ground went parallel with the river a long way. The river flowed on my right. That is, I knew that it was flowing, but I could not have told how I knew it, it was so slow. Still swollen, it was of a clear brown, in which you could see the browner trouts darting to and fro with such a slippery gliding, that the motion seemed the result of will, without any such intermediate and complicated arrangement as brain and nerves and muscles. The water-beetles went spinning about over the

surface ; and one glorious dragon-fly made a mist about him with his long wings. And over all, the sun hung in the sky, pouring down life ; shining on the roots of the willows at the bottom of the stream ; lighting up the black head of the water-rat as he hurried across to the opposite bank ; glorifying the rich green lake of the grass ; and giving to the whole an utterance of love and hope and joy, which was, to him who could read it, a more certain and full revelation of God than any display of power in thunder, in avalanche, in stormy sea. Those with whom the feeling of religion is only occasional, have it most when the awful or grand breaks out of the common ; the meek who inhabit the earth, find the God of the whole earth more evidently present — I do not say more present, for there is no measuring of His presence — more evidently in the commonest things. That which is best He gives most plentifully, as is reason with Him. Hence the quiet fullness of ordinary nature ; hence the Spirit to them that ask it.

LIII.

By slow degrees the summer bloomed. Green came instead of white ; rainbows instead of icicles. Gnarled old trees of May stood like altars of smoking perfume, or each like one million-petalled flower of upheaved whiteness — or of tender rosiness, as if the snow which had covered it in winter had sunk in and gath-

ered warmth from the life of the tree, and now crept out again to adorn the summer. The long loops of the laburnum hung heavily with gold towards the sod below; and the air was full of the fragrance of the young leaves of the limes. Down in the valley below, the daisies shone in all the meadows, varied with the buttercup and the celandine; while in damp places grew large pimpernels, and along the sides of the river, the meadow-sweet stood amongst the reeds at the very edge of the water, breathing out the odors of dreamful sleep. The clumsy pollards were each one mass of undivided green. The mill-wheel had regained its knotty look, with its moss and its dip and drip, as it yielded to the slow water, which would have let it alone, but that there was no other way out of the land to the sea. I used now to wander about in the fields and woods, with a book in my hand, at which I often did not look the whole day, and which yet I liked to have with me. And I seemed somehow to come back with most upon those days in which I did not read.

LIV.

It was a lovely day, The sun shone so warm that you could not help thinking of what he would be able to do before long—draw primroses and buttercups out of the earth by force of sweet persuasive influences. But in the shadows lay fine webs and

laces of ice, so delicately lovely that one could not but be glad of the cold that made the water able to please itself by taking such graceful forms. And I wondered over again, for the hundredth time, what could be the principle which, in the wildest, most lawless, fantastically chaotic, apparently capricious work of nature, always kept it beautiful. The beauty of holiness must be at the heart of it somehow, I thought. Because our God is so free from stain, so loving, so good, so altogether what He wants us to be, so holy, therefore all His works declare Him in beauty ; His fingers can touch nothing but to mould it into loveliness ; and even the play of His elements is in grace and tenderness of form.

LV.

The clear pure light of the morning, made me long for the truth in my heart, which alone could make me pure and clear as the morning, tune me up to the concert-pitch of the nature around me. And the wind that blew from the sunrise, made me hope in the God who had first breathed into my nostrils the breath of life ; that He would at length so fill me with His breath, His wind, His spirit, that I should think only His thoughts, and live His life, finding therein my own life, only glorified infinitely.

LVI.

God, knowing our needs, built our house for our needs—not as one man may build for another, but as no man can build for himself. For our comfort, education, training, He has put into form for us, all the otherwise hidden thoughts and feelings of our heart. Even when He speaks of the hidden things of the Spirit of God, He uses the forms or pictures of nature. The world is, as it were, the human, unseen world, turned inside out, that we may see it. On the walls of the house that He has built for us, God has hung up the pictures—ever living, ever changing pictures—of all that passes in our souls. Form and color and motion are there—ever modelling, ever renewing, never wearying. Without this living portraiture from within, we should have no word to utter that should represent a single act of the inner world. Metaphysics could have no existence, not to speak of poetry, not to speak of the commonest language of affection. But all is done in such spiritual suggestion; portrait and definition are so avoided; the whole is in such fluent evanescence, that the producing mind is only aided, never overwhelmed. It never amounts to representation. It affords but the material which the thinking, feeling soul can use, interpret, and apply for its own purposes of speech. It is, as it were, the forms of thought cast into a lovely chaos by the inferior laws

of matter, thence to be withdrawn by what we call the creative genius that God has given to men, and moulded, and modelled, and arranged, and built up to its own shapes and its own purposes.

LVII.

I turned and lingered by the old mill and fell pondering on the profusion of strength that rushed past the wheel away to the great sea, doing nothing. "Nature," I thought, "does not demand that power should always be force. Power itself must repose. "He that believeth shall not make haste," says the Bible. But it needs strength to be still. Is my faith not strong enough to be still? I looked up to the heavens once more, and the quietness of the stars seemed to reproach me. "We are safe up here," they seemed to say: "We shine, fearless and confident, for the God who gave the primrose its rough leaves to hide it from the blast of uneven spring, hangs us in the awful hollows of space, We cannot fall out of His safety. 'Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?' "

LVIII.

What has nature in common with the Bible and its metaphysics? She has a thousand things. The very wind on my face seems to rouse me to fresh effort after a pure, healthy life! Then there is the sunrise! There is the snowdrop in the snow! There is the butterfly! There is the rain of summer and the clearing of the sky after a storm! There is the hen gathering her chickens under her wing! I begin to doubt whether there be the commonplace anywhere, except in our own mistrusting nature, that will cast no care upon the unseen.

LIX.

O wind of God, that blowest in the mind,
Blow, blow, and wake the gentle spring in me;
Blow, swifter blow, a strong warm summer wind.
Till all the flowers with eyes come out to see,
Blow till the fruit hangs red on every tree,
And our high-soaring song-larks meet Thy dove —
High the imperfect soars, descends the perfect Love.

Blow not the less though winter cometh then;
Blow, wind of God, blow hither changes keen;
Let the spring creep into the ground again,
The flowers close all their eyes not to be seen;
All lives in Thee that ever once hath been;
Blow, fill my upper air with icy storms:
Breathe cold, O wind of God, and kill my canker-worms.

LX.

All about us, in earth and air, wherever eye or ear can reach, there is a power ever breathing itself forth in signs, now in a daisy, now in a wind-waft, a cloud, a sunset ; a power that holds constant and sweetest relation with the dark and silent world within us ; that the same God who is in us, and upon whose tree we are the buds, if not yet the flowers, also is all about us ; inside, the Spirit ; outside, the Word. And the two are ever trying to meet in us ; and when they meet, then the sign without, and the longing within, become one in light, and the man no more walketh in darkness, but knoweth whither he goeth.

LXI.

The face of nature is the face of God, and must bear expressions that can influence, though unconsciously to them, the most ignorant and hopeless of his children.

LXII.

“But you might have been drowned !” she sobbed.

“Nobody has a right to say that anything might have been, other than what has been. Before a thing has happened, we can say might or might not ; but

that has only to do with ignorance. Of course I am not speaking of things wherein we ought to exercise will and choice. That is our department. But this does not look like that now, does it? Think what a change—from the dark night and the waving water, to this fullness of sunlight and the bare sands, with the water lipping on their edge away there in the distance. Now I want you to think that in life troubles will come which look as if they would never pass away: the night and the storm look as if they would last forever, but the calm and the morning cannot be stopped; the storm in its very nature is transient. The effort of nature, as that of the human heart, ever is to return to its repose, for God is Peace.”

LXIII.

It is a principle of mine never to push anything over the edge. When I am successful in any argument, my one dread is of humiliating my opponent. Indeed I cannot bear it. It humiliates me. And if you want him to think about anything, you must leave him room, and not give him such associations with the question that the idea of it will be painful and irritating to him. Let him have a hand in the convincing of himself. I have been surprised sometimes to see my own arguments come up fresh and green, when I thought the fowls of the air had devoured them up. When a man reasons

for victory and not for the truth in the other soul, he is sure of just one ally, the same that Faust had in fighting Gretchen's brother — that is, the devil. But God and good men are against him. So I never follow up a victory of that kind, for, as I said, the defeat of the intellect is not the object in fighting with the sword of the Spirit, but the acceptance of the heart.

LXIV.

The man who is anxious to hold every point, will speedily bring a question to a mere dispute about trifles, leaving the real matter, whose elements may appeal to the God-like in every man, out in the cold. Such a man, having gained his paltry point, will crow like the bantam he is, while the other, who may be the greater, perhaps the better man, although in the wrong, is embittered by his smallness, and turns away with increased prejudice. Human nature can hardly be blamed for its readiness to impute to the case the shallowness of its pleader. Few men do more harm than those who, taking the right side, dispute for personal victory, and argue, as they are sure then to do, ungenerously. But even genuine argument for the truth is not preaching the Gospel, neither is he whose unbelief is thus assailed likely to be brought thereby into any mood but one unfit for receiving it. Argument should be kept to books : preachers ought to have nothing to do with it —

at all events in the pulpit. There let them hold forth light, and let him who will, receive it, and him who will not, forbear. God alone can convince, and till the full time is come for the birth of the truth in a soul, the words of even the Lord Himself are not there potent.

LXV.

CONTENTMENT.

I am content. In trumpet tones,
 My song let people know;
 And many a mighty man with thrones
 And sceptre, is not so.
 And if he is, I joyful cry,
 Why, then, he's just the same as I.

The Mogul's gold, the Sultan's show
 His bliss, supreme too soon,
 Who, lord of all the world below,
 Looked up unto the moon—
 I would not pick it up—all that
 Is only fit for laughing at.

My motto is—*Content with this.*
 Gold—place—I prize not such.
 That which I have, my measure is;
 Wise men desire not much.
 Men wish and wish, and have their will,
 And wish again as hungry still.

And gold and honor are besides
 A very brittle glass;

And time in his unresting tides,
Makes all things change and pass,
Turns riches to a beggar's dole ;
Set's glory's race an infant's goal.

Be noble — that is more than wealth ;
Do right — that's more than place ;
Then in the Spirit there is health,
And gladness in the face ;
Then thou art with thyself at one
And, no man hating, fearest none.

I am content. In trumpet tones,¹
My song, let people know ;
And many a mighty man with thrones
And sceptre is not so.
And if he is, I joyful cry
Why, then, he's just the same as I.

LXVI.

It is a great thing to have the greetings of the universe presented in fire and food. Let me, if I may, be ever welcomed to my room in winter by a glowing hearth, in summer by a vase of flowers ; if I may not, let me then think how delightful they would be, and bury myself in my work. I do not think that the road to contentment lies in despising what we have not got. Let us acknowledge all good, all delight that the world holds, and be content without it. But this we can never except by possessing the one thing, without

which I do not merely say no man ought to be content, but no man *can* be content — the Spirit of the Father.

LXVII.

Can any one tell me why it is that, when the earth is renewing her youth in the spring, man should feel feeble and low spirited, and gaze with bowed head, though pleased heart, on the crocuses ; whereas, on the contrary, in the autumn, when nature is dying for the winter, he feels strong and hopeful, holds his head erect, and walks with a vigorous step, though the flaunting dahlias discourage him greatly ? I do not ask for the physical causes : those I might be able to find out for myself, but I ask — Where is the rightness and fitness in the thing ? Should not man and nature go together in this world which was made for man — not for science, but for man ? Perhaps I have some glimmerings of where the answer lies. Perhaps “ I see a cherub that sees it.” And in many of our questions we have to be content with such an approximation to an answer as this. And for my part I am content with this. With less, I am not content.

LXVIII.

My personal attraction is towards the poor rather than the rich. I was made so. I can generally get nearer the poor than the rich. But I say *generally*, for

I have known a few rich people quite as much to my mind as the best of the poor. Thereupon, of course, their education would give them the advantage with me in the possibilities of communion. But when the heart is right, and there is a good stock of common sense as well — a gift predominant, as far as I am aware, in no one class over another, education will turn the scale very gently with me. And then when I reflect that some of these poor people would have made nobler ladies and gentlemen than all but two or three I know, if they had only had the opportunity, there is a reaction towards the poor, something like a feeling of favor because they have not had fair play — a feeling soon modified, though not altered, by the reflection that they are such because God, who loves them better than we do, has so ordered their lot, and by the recollection that not only was our Lord Himself poor, but He said the poor were blessed. And let me just say in passing that I not only believe it because He said it, but I believe it because I see that it is so. I think sometimes that the world must have been especially created for the poor, and that particular allowances will be made for the rich because they are born into such disadvantages, and with their wickednesses and their miseries, their love of spiritual dirt and meanness, subserve the highest growth and emancipation of the poor, that they may inherit both the earth and the kingdom of heaven.

LXIX.

God has such patience in working us into vessels of honor! in teaching us to be children. And shall we find the human heart, in which the germs of all that is noblest and loveliest and likest to God have begun to grow and manifest themselves, uninteresting, because its circumstances have been narrow, bare, and poverty-stricken, though neither sordid nor unclean?

LXX.

How can a man *serve* riches? Why, when he says to riches, "Ye are my good." When he feels he cannot be happy without them. When he puts forth the energies of his nature to get them. When he schemes, and dreams, and lies awake about them. When he will not give to his neighbor for fear of becoming poor himself. When he wants to have more, and to know he has more, than he can need. When he wants to leave money behind him, not for the sake of his children or relatives, but for the name of the wealth. When he leaves his money, not to those who *need* it, even of his relations, but to those who are rich like himself, making them yet more of slaves to the overgrown monster they worship for his size. When he honors those who have money because they have

money, irrespective of their character ; or when he honors in a rich man what he would not honor in a poor man. Then is he the slave of mammon. Still more is he mammon's slave when his devotion to his god makes him oppressive to those over whom his wealth gives him power ; or when he becomes unjust in order to add to his stores. How will it be with such a man, when on a sudden he finds that the world has vanished, and he is alone with God ? There lies the body in which he used to live, whose poor necessities first made money of value to him, but with which itself and its fictitious value are both left behind. He cannot now even try to bribe God with a check. The angels will not bow down to him because his property, as set forth in his will, takes five or six figures to express its amount. It makes no difference to them that he has lost it, though ; for they never respected him. And the poor souls of Hades, who envied him the wealth they had lost before, rise up as one man to welcome him, not for love of him — no worshipper of mammon loves another — but rejoicing in the mischief that has befallen him, and saying, “ Art thou also become one of us ? ” And Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, however sorry he may be for him, however grateful he may feel to him for the broken victuals and the penny, cannot with one drop of the water of paradise cool that man's parched tongue.

LXXI.

But for money and the need of it, there would not be half the friendship in the world. It is powerful for good when divinely used. Give it plenty of air, and it is sweet as the hawthorn ; shut it up, and it cankers and breeds worms. Like all the best gifts of God, like the air and the water, it must have motion and change and shakings asunder ; like the earth itself, like the heart and mind of man, it must be broken and turned, not heaped together and neglected. It is an angel of mercy, whose wings are full of balm and dews and refreshings ; but when you lay hold of him, pluck his pinions, pen him in a yard, and fall down and worship him — then, with the blessed vengeance of his master, he deals plague and confusion and terror to stay the idolatry. If I misuse, or waste, or hoard the divine thing, I pray my Master to see to it, my God to punish me. Any fire rather than be given over to the mean idol.

LXXII.

“ Friend, be not a slave. Be wary. Look not on the gold when it is yellow in thy purse. Hoard not. In God’s name, spend — spend on. Take heed how thou spendest, but take heed that thou spend. Be thou as the sun in heaven ; let thy gold be thy rays, thy angels of love and life and deliverance. Be thou a

candle of the Lord, to spread His light through the world. If hitherto, in any fashion of faithlessness, thou hast radiated darkness into the universe, humble thyself, and arise and shine.

“But if thou art poor, then look not on thy purse when it is empty. He who desires more than God wills him to have, he also is a servant of mammon, for he trusts in what God has made, and not in God himself. He who laments what God has taken from him, he is a servant of mammon. He who for care cannot pray, is a servant of mammon.”

LXXIII.

If a man talks of the main chance, meaning thereby that of making money, or of number one, meaning self thereby, except indeed he honestly jest, he is a servant of mammon. If, when thou makest a bargain, thou thinkest *only* of thyself and thy gain, thou art a servant of mammon. The eager looks of those that would get money, the troubled looks of those that have lost it, worst of all, the gloating looks of them that have it — these are sure signs of the service of mammon. If in the church thou sayest to the rich man, “Sit here in a good place,” and to the poor man, “Stand there,” thou art a mammon-server. If thou favorest the company of those whom men call well-to-do, when they are only well-to-eat, or well-to-drink, or well-to-show, and de-

climest that of the simple and the meek, then in thy deepest consciousness know that thou servest mammon and not God. If thy hope of well-being in time to come rests upon thy houses, or lands, or business, or money in store, and not upon the living God, be thou friendly and kind with the overflowings of thy possessions, or a churl whom no man loves, thou art equally a server of mammon. If the loss of thy goods would take from thee the joy of thy life ; if it would tear thy heart that the men thou hadst feasted should hold forth to thee the two fingers instead of the whole hand ; nay, if thy thought of to-morrow makes thee quail before the duty of to-day, if thou broodest over the evil that is to come, and turnest from the God who is with thee in the life of the hour, thou servest mammon ; he holds thee in his chain ; thou art his ape, whom he leads about the world for the mockery of his fellow-devils. If with thy word, yea, even with thy judgment, thou confessest that God is the only good, yet livest as if He had sent thee into the world to make thyself rich before thou die ; if it will add one feeblest pang to the pains of thy death, to think that thou must leave thy fair house, thy ancestral trees, thy horses, thy shop, thy books, behind thee, then art thou a servant of mammon, and far truer to thy master than he will prove to thee. Ah, slave ! the moment the breath is out of thy body, lo, he has already deserted thee ! and of all in which thou didst rejoice, all that gave thee such power over thy fellows, there is

not left so much as a spike of thistle-down for the wind to waft from thy sight. For all thou hast had, there is nothing to show. Where is the friendship in which thou mightst have invested thy money, in place of burying it in the maw of mammon? Troops of the dead might now be coming to greet thee with love and service, hadst thou made thee friends with thy money; but, alas! to thee it was not money, but mammon, for thou didst love it — not for the righteousness and salvation thou by its means mightst work in the earth, but for the honor it brought thee among men, for the pleasures and immunities it purchased.

LXXIV.

I knew a rich lady once, in giving a large gift of money to a poor man, say apologetically, "I hope it is no disgrace in me to be rich, as it is none in you to be poor." It is not the being rich that is wrong, but the serving of riches, instead of making them serve your neighbor and yourself — your neighbor for this life, yourself for the everlasting habitations. God knows it is hard for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven; but the rich man does sometimes enter in; for God hath made it possible. And the greater the victory, when it is the rich man that overcometh the world. It is easier for the poor man to enter into the kingdom, yet many of the poor have

failed to enter in, and the greater is the disgrace of their defeat. For as the poor have more done for them, as far as outward things go, in the way of salvation, than the rich, and have a beatitude all to themselves besides.

LXXV.

The opinion of no man who does not render back his soul to the living God, and live in Him, is, in religion, worth the splinter of a straw. Friends, cast your idol into the furnace; melt your mammon down, coin him up, make God's money of him, and send him coursing. Make of him cups to carry the gift of God, the water of life, through the world—in lovely justice to the oppressed, in healthful labor to them whom no man hath hired, in rest to the weary who have borne the burden and heat of the day, in joy to the heavy-hearted, in laughter to the dull-spirited. Let them all be glad with reason, and merry without revel. Ah! what gifts in music, in the drama, in the tale, in the picture, in the spectacle, in books and models, in flowers and friendly feasting, what true gifts might not the mammon of unrighteousness, changed back into the money of God, give to men and women, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh! How would you not spend your money for the Lord, if he needed it at your hand! He does need it; for he that spends it upon the least of his fellows, spends it upon his Lord. To

hold fast upon God with one hand, and open wide the other to your neighbor—that is religion; that is the law and prophets, and the true way to all better things that are yet to come.

LXXVI.

Perhaps the highest moral height which a man can reach, and at the same time the most difficult of attainment, is the willingness to be *nothing* relatively, so that he attain that positive excellence which the original conditions of his being render not merely possible, but imperative. It is nothing to a man to be greater or less than another; to be esteemed or otherwise by the public or private world in which he moves. Does he, or does he not, behold and love and live the unchangeable, the essential, the divine. This he can only do according as God has made him. He can behold and understand God in the least degree, as well as in the greatest, only by the God-like within him; and he that loves thus the good and great has no room, no thought, no necessity, for comparison and difference. The truth satisfies him. He lives in his absoluteness. God makes the glow-worm, as well as the star; the light in both is divine. If mine be an earth-star to gladden the wayside, I must cultivate humbly and rejoicingly its green earth-glow, and not seek to blanch it to the whiteness of the

stars that lie in the fields of blue. For to deny God in my own being, is to cease to behold Him in any. God and man can meet only by the man becoming that which God meant him to be. Then he enters into the house of life, which is greater than the house of fame. It is better to be a child in a green field than a knight of many orders in a state ceremonial.

LXXVII.

It is not great battles alone that build up the world's history, nor great poems alone that make the generations grow. There is a still, small rain from heaven, that has more to do with the blessedness of nature, and of human nature, than the mightiest earthquake, or the loveliest rainbow.

LXXVIII.

As I came near, I smelt what has been to me always a delightful smell — that of fresh deals under the hands of the carpenter. In the scent of those boards of pine was inclosed all the idea the tree could gather of the world of forest where it was reared. It speaks of many wild and bright but chiefly clean and rather cold things. If I were idling, it would draw me to it across many fields. Turning a corner, I heard the sound of a saw. And this sound drew me yet more. For a carpenter's shop was

the delight of my boyhood ; and after I began to read the history of our Lord with something of that sense of reality with which we read other histories, and which, I am sorry to think, so much of the well-meant instruction we receive in our youth tends to destroy, my feeling about such a work-shop grew stronger and stronger, till at last I never could go near enough to see the shavings lying on the floor of one without a spiritual sensation such as I have in entering an old church ; which sensation, ever since having been admitted on the usual conditions to a Mohammedan mosque, urges me to pull off, not only my hat, but my shoes likewise. And the feeling has grown upon me, till now it seems at times as the only cure in the world for social pride would be to go for five silent minutes into a carpenter's shop. How one can think of himself as above his neighbors, within sight, sound, or smell of one, I fear I am getting almost unable to imagine.

LXXIX.

If we could once leave it to each other to give what honor is due ; knowing that honor demanded is as worthless as insult undeserved is hurtless ! What has one to do to honor himself ? That is and can be no honor. When one has learned to seek the honor that cometh from God only, he will take the withholding of the honor that comes from men very quietly indeed.

LXXX.

The history of the kingdom of heaven — need I say I mean a very different thing from what is called *church-history*? — is the only history that will ever be able to show itself a history — that can ever come to be thoroughly written, or to be read with a clear understanding: for it alone will prove able to explain itself, while in doing so it will explain all other attempted histories as well. Many of those who will then be found first in the eternal record may have been of little regard in the eyes of even their religious contemporaries, may have been absolutely unknown to the generations that came after, and were yet the men of life and potency, working as light, as salt, as leaven, in the world. When the real worth of things is, over all, the measure of their estimation, then is the kingdom of our God and His Christ.

LXXXI.

“‘My strength is made perfect in weakness,’” said Ruth, solemnly, heedless of the depreciation.

“I think I like the older reading better — that is, without the *my*,” said Polwarth: “‘Strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Somehow — I cannot explain the feeling — to hear a grand aphorism spoken in widest application, as a fact of more than humanity,

of all creation, from the mouth of the human God, the living Wisdom, seems to bring me close to the very heart of the universe. Strength—strength itself—all over—is made perfect in weakness : a law of being, you see, Ruth ! not a law of Christian growth only, but a law of growth, even all the growth leading up to the Christian, which growth is the highest kind of creation. The Master's own strength was thus perfected, and so must be that of His brothers and sisters. Ah, what a strength must be His !—how patient in endurance—how gentle in exercise—how mighty in devotion—how fine in its issues, perfected by such suffering ! Ah, my child, you suffer sorely, sometimes—I know it well ! but shall we not let patience have her perfect work, that we may—one day, Ruth, one day, my child—be perfect and entire, wanting nothing ? ”

LXXXII.

Brothers, sisters, all good men and true women, let the Master seat us where He will. Until He says, “Come up higher,” let us sit at the foot of the board, or stand behind, honored in waiting upon His guests. All that kind of thing is worth nothing in the kingdom ; and nothing will be remembered of us but the Master's judgment.

LXXXIII

“Do you not profess to have, and hold, and therefore teach, the truth?”

“I profess only to have caught glimpses of her white garments — those, I mean, of the abstract truth of which you speak. But I have seen that which is eternally beyond her: the ideal in the real, the living truth; not the truth that I can *think*, but the truth that thinks itself, that thinks me, that God has thought, yea, that God is, the truth *being* true to itself, and to God, and to man — Christ Jesus, my Lord, who knows, and feels, and does the truth. I have seen Him, and I am both content and unsatisfied. For in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

LXXXIV.

If there be truth, that truth must be itself — must exercise its own blessing nature upon the soul which receives it in loyal understanding — that is, in obedience. A man may accept no end of things as facts which are not facts, and his mistakes will not hurt him. He may be unable to receive many facts as facts, and neither they nor his refusal of them will hurt. He may not a whit the less be living in and by the truth. He may be quite unable to answer the doubts of another, but if, in the progress of his life, those doubts should

present themselves to his own soul, then will he be able to meet them ; he is in the region where all true answers are gathered. He may be unable to receive this or that embodiment or form of truth, not having yet grown to its level, but it is no matter so long as when he sees a truth he does it ; to see and not do would at once place him in eternal danger. Hence, a man of ordinary intellect and little imagination may yet be so radiant in nobility as, to the true poet heart, to be right worshipful. There is in the man who does the truth, the radiance of life essential, eternal — a glory infinitely beyond any that can belong to the intellect, beyond any that can ever come within its scope to be judged, proven, or denied by it. Through experiences doubtful even to the soul in which they pass, the life they may yet be flowing in. To know God is to be in the secret place of all knowledge ; and to trust Him changes the atmosphere surrounding mystery and seeming contradiction, from one of pain and fear to one of hope ; the unknown may be some lovely truth in store for us, which yet we are not good enough to apprehend. A man may dream all night that he is awake, and, when he does wake, be none the less sure that he is awake, in that he thought so all the night when he was not ; but he will find himself no more able to prove it than he would have been then, only able to talk better about it. The differing consciousnesses of the two conditions cannot be *produced* in evidence, or embodied

in forms of the understanding. But my main point is this, that not to be intellectually certain of a truth does not prevent the heart that loves and obeys that truth from getting its truth-good, from drawing life from its holy *factness*, present in the love of it.

LXXXV.

When we rise into the mountain air, we require no other testimony than that of our lungs that we are in a healthful atmosphere. We do not find it necessary to submit it to a quantitative analysis; we are content that we breathe with joy, that we grow in strength, become lighter-hearted and better-tempered. Truth is a very different thing from fact; it is the loving contact of the soul with spiritual fact, vital and potent. It does its work in the soul independently of all faculty or qualification there for setting it forth or defending it. Truth in the inward parts is a power, not an opinion. It were as poor a matter as any held by those who deny it, if it had not its vitality in itself, if it depended upon any buttressing of other and lower material.

How should it be otherwise? If God be so near as the very idea of Him necessitates, what other availing proof of His existence can there be, than such *awareness* as must come of the developing relation between Him and us? The most satisfying of intellectual proofs, if such were to be had, would be of no value. God would

be no nearer us for them all. They would bring about no blossoming of the mighty fact. While He was in our very souls, there would yet lie between Him and us a gulf of misery, of no knowledge.

Peace is for those who *do* the truth, not those who opine it. The true man troubled by intellectual doubt is so troubled unto further health and growth. Let him be alive and hopeful, above all, obedient, and he will be able to wait for the deeper content which must follow with completer insight. Men may say such a man but deceives himself, that there is nothing of the kind he pleases himself with imagining ; but this is at least worth reflecting upon — that while the man who aspires fears he may be deceiving himself, it is the man who does not aspire who asserts that he is. One day the former may be sure, and the latter may cease to deny, and begin to doubt !

LXXXVI.

Any recognition of truth, whatever form it may take, whether that of poetic delight, intellectual corroboration, practical commonplace, or even vulgar aphorism, must be welcomed by the husbandmen of the God of growth. A response which jars against the popular pitch of our mental instrument, must not therefore be turned away from with dislike. Our mood of the moment is not that by which the universe is tuned into

its harmonies. We must drop our instrument and listen to the other, and if we find that the player upon it is breathing after a higher expression, is, after his fashion, striving to embody something he sees of the same truth, the utterance of which called forth this his answer, let us thank God and take courage. God at least is pleased : and if our refinement and education take away from our pleasure, it is because of something low, false, and selfish ; not divine, in a word, that is mingled with that refinement and that education.

LXXXVII.

Nothing can be known except what is true. A negative may be *fact*, but cannot be *known* except by the knowledge of its opposite. I believe also that nothing can be really *believed*, except it be true. But people think they believe many things which they do not and cannot in the real sense believe.

When, however, Dorothy came to concern herself about the will of God, in trying to help her father to do the best with their money, she began to reap a little genuine comfort, for then she found things begin to explain themselves a little. The more a man occupies himself in doing the works of the Father — the sort of thing the Father does — the easier will he find it to believe that such a Father is at work in the world.

LXXXVIII.

People talk about special providences. I believe in the providences, but not in the specialty. I do not believe that God lets the thread of my affairs go for six days, and on the seventh evening takes it up for a moment. The so-called special providences are no exception to the rule — they are common to all men at all moments. But it is a fact that God's care is more evident in some instances of it than others to the dim and often bewildered vision of humanity. Upon such instances men seize and call them providences. It is well that they can; but it would be gloriously better if they could believe that the whole matter is one grand providence.

LXXXIX.

All the time I was speaking, the rain, mingled with sleet, was dashing against the windows, and the wind was howling over the graves all about. But the dead were not troubled by the storm; and over my head, from beam to beam of the roof, now resting on one, now flitting to another, a sparrow kept flying, which had taken refuge in the church till the storm should cease, and the sun shine out in the great temple. "This," I said aloud, "is what the church is for; as the sparrow finds there a house from the storm, so the human heart escapes thither to hear the still small

voice of God when its faith is too weak to find Him in the storm, and in the sorrow, and in the pain." And while I spoke, a dim watery gleam fell on the chancel floor, and the comfort of the sun awoke in my heart. Nor let any one call me superstitious for taking that pale sun-ray of hope as sent to me ; for I received it as comfort for the race, and for me as one of the family, even as the bow that was set in the cloud, a promise to the eyes of light for them that sit in darkness. As I write, my eye falls upon the Bible on the table by my side, and I read the words, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory." And I lift my eyes from my paper and look abroad from my window, and the sun is shining in its strength. The leaves are dancing in the light wind that gives them each its share of the sun, and my trouble has passed away forever, like the storm of that night, and the unrest of that strange Sabbath.

Such comforts would come to us oftener from nature, if we really believed that our God was the God of nature ; that when He made, or rather when He makes, He means, that not His hands only, but His heart, too, is in the making of those things ; that, therefore, the influences of nature upon human minds and hearts are because He intended them. And if we believe that our God is everywhere, why should we not think Him present even in the coincidences that sometimes

seem so strange? For if He be in the things that coincide, He must be in the coincidence of those things.

XC.

If people were both observant and memorious, they would cease, I fancy, to be astonished at coincidences. Rightly regarded, the universe is but one coincidence — only where will has to be developed, there is need for human play, and room for that in its spaces must be provided. The works of God being from the beginning, and all his beginnings invisible either from greatness or smallness, or nearness or remoteness, numberless coincidences may pass in every man's history before he becomes capable of knowing either the need or good of them; he has only enjoyed their results.

XCI.

One of the highest benefits we can reap from understanding the way of God with ourselves is, that we become able thus to trust Him for others with whom we do not understand His ways.

XCII.

However strange it may well seem, to do one's duty will make any one conceited who only does it some-

times. Those who do it always would as soon think of being conceited of eating their dinner as of doing their duty. What honest boy would pride himself on not picking pockets? A thief who was trying to reform would. To be conceited of doing one's duty is then a sign of how little one does it, and how little one sees what a contemptible thing it is not to do it. Could any but a low creature be conceited of not being contemptible? Until our duty becomes to us as common as breathing, we are poor creatures.

XCIII.

What God may hereafter require of you, you must not give yourself the least trouble about. Everything He gives you to do, you must do as well as ever you can, and that is the best possible preparation for what He may want you to do next. If people would but do what they have to do, they would always find themselves ready for what came next. And I do not believe that those who follow this rule are ever left floundering on the sea-deserted sands of inaction, unable to find water enough to swim in.

XCIV.

The morning, as it drew slowly on, was a strange contrast, in its gray and saffron, to the gorgeous sunset

of the night before. The sea crept up on the land as if it were weary, and did not care much to flow any more. Not a breath of wind was in motion, and yet the air even on the shore seemed full of the presence of decaying leaves and damp earth.

Malcolm sat down in the mouth of the cave, and looked out on the still, half-waking world of ocean and sky before him—a leaden ocean, and a dull, misty sky; and as he gazed, a sadness came stealing over him, and a sense of the endlessness of labor—labor ever returning on itself and making no progress. What was the much good of life? Where was the end of it all? People so seldom got what they desired! If all the world were happy but one man, that one's misery would be as a cairn on which the countless multitudes of the blessed must heap the stones of endless questions and enduring perplexities.

Unseen from where he sat, the sun drew nearer the horizon; the light grew; the tide began to ripple up more diligently; a glimmer of dawn touched even the brown rock in the farthest end of the cave.

Where there was light, there was work, and where there was work for any one, there was at least justification of his existence. That work must be done, if it should return and return in a never broken circle. Its theory could wait. For indeed the only hope of finding the theory of all theories, the divine idea, lay in the going on of things.

XCV.

The man who will not do a thing for duty, will never get so far as to derive any help from the hope of goodness. Duty itself is only a stage towards something better. It is but the impulse, God-given, I believe, towards a far more vital contact with the truth. We shall one day forget all about duty, and do everything from the love of the loveliness of it, the satisfaction of the rightness of it. What would you say to a man who ministered to the wants of his wife and family only from duty? Of course you wish heartily that the man who neglects them would do it from any cause, even were it fear of the whip; but the strongest and most operative sense of duty would not satisfy you in such a relation. There are depths within depths of righteousness. Duty is the only path to freedom, but that freedom is the love that is beyond and anticipates duty.

The thing that God loves is the only lovely thing and he who does it, does well, and is upon the way to discover that he does it very badly. When he comes to do it, as the will of the perfect good, then is he on the road to do it perfectly — that is, from love of its own inherent self-constituted goodness, born in the heart of the perfect. The doing of things from duty is but a stage on the road to the kingdom of truth and love. Not the less must the stage be journeyed; every

path diverging from it is "the flowery way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire."

XCVI.

Hark, hark, a voice amid the quiet intense !
It is thy Duty waiting thee without.
Rise from thy knees in hope, the half of doubt ;
A hand doth pull thee — it is Providence ;
Open thy door straightway, and get thee hence ;
Go forth into the tumult and the shout ;
Work, love, with workers, lovers all about :
Of noise alone is born the inward sense ;
Of silence ; and from action springs alone
The inward knowledge of true love and faith.
Then, weary, go thou back with failing breath,
And in thy chamber make thy prayer and moan ;
One day upon *His* bosom, all thine own,
Thou shalt lie still embraced in holy death.

XCVII.

I cannot count it perfect hospitality to be friendly and plentiful towards those whom you have invited to your house — what thank has a man in that ? — while you are cold and forbidding to those who have not that claim on your attention. That is not perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. By all means tell people, when you are busy about something that must be done, that you cannot spare the time for them except they want you

upon something of yet more pressing necessity ; but *tell* them, and do not get rid of them by the use of the instrument commonly called *the cold shoulder*. It is a wicked instrument that, and ought to have fallen out of use by this time.

XCVIII.

See the tendency of man to conceal his treasures, to claim even truth as his own by discovery, to hide it and be proud of it, gloating over that which he thinks he has in himself, instead of groaning after the infinite of God ! We would be forever heaping together possessions, dragging things into the cave of our finitude, our individual self, not perceiving that the things which pass that dreariest of doors, whatever they may have been, are thenceforth “but straws, small sticks, and dust of the floor.” When a man would have a truth in thither as if it were of no private interpretation, he drags in only the bag which the truth, remaining outside, has burst and left.

XCIX.

Is it not a strange drift of men, to hide what is, under the veil of what is not ? to seek refuge in lies, as if that which is not could be an armor of adamant ? to run from the daylight for safety, deeper into the cave ? In the cave house the creatures of the night — the

tigers and hyenas, the serpent and the old dragon of the dark ; in the light are true men and women, and the clear-eyed angels. But the reason is only too plain ; it is, alas ! that they are themselves of the darkness and not of light. They do not fear their own. They are more comfortable with the beasts of darkness than with the angels of light. They dread the peering of holy eyes into their hearts ; they feel themselves naked and fear to be shamed, therefore cast the garment of hypocrisy about them. They have that in them so strange to the light that they feel it must be hidden from the eye of day, as a thing *hideous*, that is, a thing to be hidden. But the hypocrisy is worse than all it would hide. That, they have to hide again, as a more hideous thing still.

God hides nothing. His very work from the beginning is *revelation* — a casting aside of veil after veil, a showing unto men of truth after truth. On and on, from fact to fact divine He advances, until at length in His 'Son, Jesus, He unveils His very face. Then begins a fresh unveiling, for the very work of the Father is the work the Son Himself has to do — self, and the unveiling of the Son, is still going on, and is that for the sake of which the world exists. When He is unveiled — that is, when we know the Son — we shall know the Father also. The whole of creation, its growth, its history, the gathering total of human existence, is an unveiling of the Father. He is the life, the

eternal life, the *Only*. I see it — ah ! believe me — I see it as I cannot say it. From month to month it grows upon me. The lovely home-light, the one essence of peaceful being, is God Himself.

He loves light and not darkness, therefore shines, therefore reveals. True, there are infinite gulfs in Him, into which our small vision cannot pierce ; but they are gulfs of light, and the truths there are invisible only through excess of their own clarity. There is a darkness that comes of effulgence, and the most veiling of all veils is the light. That for which the eye exists is light, but *through* light no human eye can pierce. I find myself beyond my depth. I am ever beyond my depth, afloat in an infinite sea ; but the depth of the sea knows me, for the ocean of my being is God. What I would say is this : that the light is not blinding because God would hide, but because the truth is too glorious for our vision. The effulgence of Himself, God veiled that He might unveil it — in His Son. Inter-universal spaces, æons, eternities — what word of vastness you can find or choose — take unfathomable darkness itself, if you will, to express the infinitude of God, that original splendor existing only to the consciousness of God Himself — I say He hides it not, but is revealing it ever, forever, at all cost of labor, yea, of pain to Himself. His whole creation is a sacrificing of Himself to the being and well-being of His little ones, that, being wrought out at last into partakers of His divine nature,

that nature may be revealed in them to their divinest bliss. He brings hidden things out of the light of His own being into the light of ours.

C.

The next day, the day of the resurrection, rose glorious from its sepulchre of sea-fog and drizzle. It had poured all night long, but at sunrise the clouds had broken and scattered, and the air was the purer for the cleansing rain, while the earth shone with that peculiar lustre which follows the weeping which has endured its appointed night. The larks were at it again, singing as if their hearts would break for joy, as they hovered in brooding exultation over the song of the future; for their nests beneath hoarded a wealth of larks for summers to come.

The inward hush of the resurrection, broken only by the prophetic birds, the poets of the groaning and travailing creation, held time and space as in a trance; and the centre from which radiated both the hush and the carolling expectation seemed to Alexander Graham to be the churchyard in which he was now walking in the cool of the morning. It was more carefully kept than most Scottish churchyards, and yet was not too trim. Nature had a word in the affair — was allowed her part of mourning, in long grass and moss, and the crumbling away of stone. The wholesomeness of decay

which both in nature and humanity is but the miry road back to life, was not unrecognized here ; there was nothing of the hideous attempt to hide death in the garments of life. The master walked about gently, now stopping to read some well-known inscription, and ponder for a moment over the words ; and now wandering across the stoneless mounds content to be forgotten by all but those who loved the departed. At length he seated himself on a slab by the side of the mound that rose but yesterday ; it was sculptured with symbols of decay — needless, surely, where the originals lay about the mouth of every newly-opened grave, and as surely ill-befitting the precincts of a church whose indwelling gospel is of life victorious over death.

“What are these stones,” he said to himself, “but monuments to oblivion ? They are not memorials of the dead, but memorials of the forgetfulness of the living. How vain it is to send a poor forsaken name, like the title page of a lost book, down the careless stream of time ! Let me serve my generation, and let God remember me !”

CI.

Many a life has been injured by the constant expectation of death. It is life we have to do with, not death. The best preparation for the night is to work while the day lasts, diligently. The best preparation for death is life.

CII.

Life is gladness ; it is the death in it that makes the misery. We call life-in-death life, and hence the mistake. If gladness were not at the root, whence its opposite sorrow against which we arise, from which we recoil, with which we fight ? We recognize it as death — the contrary of life. There could be no sorrow but for a recognition of primordial bliss. This in us that fights must be life. It is of the nature of light, not of darkness. Darkness is nothing until the light comes. The very child-play of nature is her assertion of the secret that life is the deepest — that life shall conquer death ; those who believe this must bear the good news to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death. Our Lord has conquered death — yea, the moral death that He called the world — and now having sown the seed of light, the harvest is springing in human hearts, and will grow and grow until the hearts of the children of the kingdom shall rejoice in the sunlight of the Father's presence.

CIII.

“In nothing,” said the curate, “do we show less faith than the way in which we think and speak about death. ‘O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?’ says the apostle. ‘Here, here, here,’ cry the Christian people, ‘everywhere ! It is an awful

sting, a fearful victory. But God keeps it away from us many a time when we ask Him — to let it pierce us to the heart at last, to be sure; but that can't be helped.' I mean this is how they feel in their hearts who do not believe that God is as merciful when He sends death as when He sends life; who, Christian people as they are, yet look upon death as an evil thing which cannot be avoided, and would, if they might live always, be content to live always. Death or life — each is God's; for He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; there are no dead, for all live to Him."

"But don't you think we naturally shrink from death?"

"There can be doubt about that."

"Then, if it be natural, God must have meant that it should be so."

"Doubtless, to begin with; but not to continue or end with. A child's sole desire is for food — the very best possible to begin with. But how would it be if the child should reach, say, two years of age, and refuse to share the same with his little brother? Or what comes of the man who never so far rises above the desire for food, that nothing could make him forget his dinner-hour? Just so the life of Christians should be strong enough to overcome the fear of death. We ought to love and believe our Saviour so much that when He says we shall not die, we should at least be-

lieve that death must be very different from what it looks to us to be — so different, that what we mean by the word does not apply to the reality at all ; and so Jesus cannot use the word, because it would not seem to us that He meant what we mean by it, which He, seeing it all round, cannot mean.”

CIV.

While the curate was preaching in the cool cavernous church, with its great lights overhead, Walter Drake, the old minister, as he was now called by his disloyal congregation — sat in a little arbor looking out on the river that flowed through the town to the sea. Green grass went down from where he sat to the very water's brink. It was a spot the old man loved, for there his best thoughts came to him. There was in him a good deal of the stuff of which poets are made, and since trouble overtook him, the river had more and more gathered to itself the aspect of that in the “Pilgrim's Progress ;” and often, as he sat thus almost on its edge, he fancied himself waiting the welcome summons to go home. It was a tidal river, with many changes. Now it flowed with a full, calm current, conquering the tide, like life sweeping death with it down into the bosom of the eternal. Now it seemed to stand still, as if aghast at the inroad of the awful thing ; and then the minister would bethink himself that it was the tide of the eter-

nal rising in the narrow earthly channel: men, he said to himself, called it *death*, because they did not know what it was, or the loveliness of its quickening energy. It fails on their sense by the might of its grand excess, and they call it by the name of its opposite. A weary and rather disappointed pilgrim, he thus comforted himself as he sat.

CV.

“To think,” I said to myself, as I walked over the bridge to the village street — “to think that the one moment the person is here, and the next — who shall say *where?* for we know nothing of the region beyond the grave! Not even our risen Lord thought fit to bring back from hades any news for the human family standing straining their eyes after their brothers and sisters that have vanished in the dark. Surely it is well, all well, although we know nothing, save that our Lord has been there, knows all about it, and does not choose to tell us. Welcome ignorance, then! the ignorance in which He chooses to leave us. I would rather not know, if He gave me my choice, but preferred that I should not know.”

CVI.

He went slowly through the churchyard, breathing deep breaths of the delicious spring-morning air.

Raindrops were sparkling all over the grassy graves, and in the hollows of the stones they had gathered in pools. The eyes of the death-heads were full of water, as if weeping at the defeat of their master. Every now and then a soft little wind awoke, like a throb of the spirit of life, and shook together the scattered drops upon the trees, and then down came diamond showers on the grass and daisies of the mounds, and fed the green moss in the letters of the epitaphs. Over all the sun was shining, as if everywhere and forever spring was the order of things. And is it not so? Is not the idea of the creation an eternal spring ever trembling on the verge of summer? It seemed so to the curate, who was not given to sad, still less to sentimental moralizing over the graves. From such moods his heart recoiled. To him they were weak and mawkish, and in him they would have been treacherous. No grave was to him the place where a friend was lying; it was but a cenotaph — the place where the Lord had lain.

“Let those possessed with demons haunt the tombs,” he said, as he sat down in the pulpit; “for me, I will turn my back upon them with the risen Christ! Yes, friend, I hear you! I know what you say! You have more affection than I? you cannot forsake the last resting-place of the beloved? Well, you may have more feeling than I; there is no gauge by which I can tell, and if there were it would be useless: we are as God

made us. No, I will not say that; I will say rather, I am as God is making me, and I shall one day be as He has made me. Meantime I know that He will have me love my enemy tenfold more than now I love my friend. Thou believest that the malefactor — ah, there was faith now! Of two men dying together in agony and shame, the one beseeches of the other the grace of a king! Thou believest, I say — at least thou professest to believe, that the malefactor was that very day with Jesus in paradise, and yet thou broodest over thy friend's grave, gathering thy thoughts about the pitiful garment he left behind him, and letting himself drift away into the unknown, forsaken of all by thy vaguest, most shapeless thinkings! Tell me not thou fearest to enter there whence has issued no revealing. It is God who gives thee thy mirror of imagination, and if thou keep it clean, it will give thee back no shadow but of the truth. Never a cry of love went forth from human heart but it found some heavenly chord to fold it in. Be sure thy friend inhabits a day not out of harmony with this morning of earthly spring, with this sunlight, those raindrops, that sweet wind that flows so softly over his grave."

CVII.

The world is full of resurrections. Every night that folds us up in darkness, is a death; and those of you

What have been out early, and have seen the first of the dawn, will know it—the day rises out of the night like a being that has burst its tomb and escaped into life. But it is yet more of a resurrection to you. Think of your own condition through the night and in the morning. You die, as it were, every night. The death of darkness comes down over the earth; but a deeper death, the death of sleep, descends on you. A power overshadows you; your eyelids close, you cannot keep them open if you would; your limbs lie moveless; the day is gone; your whole life is gone; you have forgotten everything; an evil man might come and do with your goods as he pleased; you are helpless. But the God of the resurrection is awake all the time watching His sleeping men and women, even as a mother who watches her sleeping babes, only with larger eyes and more full of love than hers; and so, you know not how, all at once you know that you are what you are; that there is a world that wants you, outside of you; and a God that wants you inside of you; you rise from the death of sleep, not by your own power, for you knew nothing about it; God put His hand over your eyes, and you were dead; He lifted His hand and breathed light on you, and you rose from the dead, thanked the God who raised you up, and went forth to do your work. From darkness to light, from blindness to seeing; from knowing noth

ing to looking abroad on the mighty world ; from helpless submission to willing obedience—is not this a resurrection indeed ?

CVIII.

Look at the death that falls upon the world in winter. And look how it revives when the sun draws near enough in the spring to wile the life in it once more out of its grave. See how the pale, meek snow-drops come up with their bowed heads, as if full of the memory of the fierce winds they encountered last spring, and yet ready in the strength of their weakness to encounter them again. Up comes the crocus, bringing its gold safe from the dark of its colorless grave into the light of its parent gold. Primroses and anemones, and bluebells, and a thousand other children of the spring, hear the resurrection-trumpet of the wind from the West and South, obey, and leave their graves behind to breathe the air of the sweet heavens. Up and up they come, till the year is glorious with the rose and the lily, till the trees are not only clothed upon with new garments of loveliest green, but the fruit-tree bringeth forth its fruit, and the little children of men are made glad with apples, and cherries, and hazle-nuts. The earth laughs out in green and gold. The sky shares in the grand resurrection. The garments of its mourning wherewith

it made men sad, its clouds of snow and hail and stormy vapors are swept away, have sunk indeed to the earth, and are now humbly feeding the roots of the flowers, whose dead stalks they beat upon, all the winter long. Instead, the sky has put on the garments of praise. Her blue, colored after the sapphire-floor, on which stands the throne of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life, is dashed and glorified with the pure white of sailing clouds, and at morning and evening prayer, puts on colors in which the human heart drowns itself with delight — green and gold, and purple and rose. Even the icebergs floating about in the lonely summer seas of the North, are flashing all the glories of the rainbow. But, indeed, is not this whole world itself a monument of the resurrection. The earth was without form and void. The wind of God moved on the face of the waters, and up arose this fair world. Darkness was on the face of the deep: God said, “Let there be light, and there was light.”

CIX.

Look at the story of the butterfly—so plain that the pagan Greek called it and the soul by one name — Psyche. Look how the creeping thing, ugly to our eyes, so that we can hardly handle it without a shudder, finding itself growing sick with age, straightway

falls a spinning and weaving at its own shroud, coffin and grave all in one — to prepare, in fact, for its resurrection ; for it is for the sake of the resurrection that death exists. Patiently it spins its strength, but not its life, away, folds itself up decently, that its body may rest in quiet till the new body is formed within it ; and at length when the appointed hour has arrived, out of the body of this crawling thing breaks forth the winged splendor of the butterfly — not the same body — a new built out of the ruins of the old — even as St. Paul tells us that it is not the same body *we* have in the resurrection, but a nobler body like ourselves, with all the imperfect and evil thing taken away. No more creeping for the butterfly ; wings of splendor, now. Neither yet has it lost the feet wherewith to alight on all that is lovely and sweet. Think of it — up from the toilsome journey, over the low ground, exposed to the foot of every passer-by, destroying the lovely leaves upon which it fed, and the fruit which they should shelter, up to the path at will through the air, and a gathering of food which hurts not the source of it — a food which is as but a tribute from the loveliness of the flowers to the yet higher loveliness of the flower-angel — is not this a resurrection ? Its children, too, shall pass through the same process, to wing the air of a summer noon, and rejoice in the ethereal and the pure.

CX.

Some say: "How can the same dust be raised again, when it may be scattered to the winds of heaven?" It is a question I hardly care to answer. The mere difficulty can in reason stand for nothing with God; but the apparent worthlessness of the supposition renders the question uninteresting to me. What is of import is, that I should stand clothed upon with a body which is *my* body, because it serves my ends, justifies my consciousness of identity by being, in all that was good in it, like that which I had before, while now it is tenfold capable of expressing the thoughts and feelings that move within me. How can I care whether the atoms that form a certain inch of bone should be the same as those which formed that bone when I died. All my life-time I never felt or thought of the existence of such a bone! On the other hand I object to having the same worn muscles, the same shrivelled skin with which I happen to die. Why give me the same body as that? Why not rather my youthful body, which was strong, and facile and capable? The matter in the muscle of my arm at death would not serve to make half the muscle I had when young. But I thank God that St. Paul says it will *not* be the same body. That body dies—up springs another body. I suspect myself that those are right, who say that this body, being the seed, the moment it dies in

the soil of this world, that moment is the resurrection of the new body. The life in it, rises out of it, in a new body. This is not after it is put in the mere earth, for it is dead then and the germ of life gone out of it. If a seed rots, ño new body comes of it. The seed dies into a new life, and so does man. Dying and rotting are two very different things—but I am not sure by any means. As I say, the whole question is rather uninteresting to me. What do I care about my old clothes after I have done with them? What is to me to know what becomes of an old coat, or an old pulpit gown? I have no such clinging to the flesh. It seems to me that people believe their bodies to be themselves, and are therefore very anxious about them—and no wonder, then. Enough for me that I shall have eyes to see my friends, a face that they shall know me by, and a mouth to praise God withal. I am well content to rise as Jesus rose, however that was. For me the will of God is so good that I would rather have His will done than my own choice given me.

CXI.

If into the face of the dead body, lying on the bed, waiting for its burial, the soul of the man should begin to dawn again, drawing near from afar to look out once more at those eyes, to smile once again through

those lips, the change on that face would be indeed great and wondrous, but nothing for marvel or greatness to that which passes on the countenance, the very outward bodily face of the man who wakes from his sleep, arises from the dead, and receives light from Christ. Too often, indeed, the reposeful look on the face of the dead body would be troubled, would vanish away at the revisiting of the restless ghost ; but when a man's own right, true mind, which God made in him, is restored to him again, and he wakes from the death of sin, then comes the repose without the death. It may take long for the new spirit to complete the visible change, but it begins at once, and will be perfected. The bloated look of self-indulgence passes away like the leprosy of Naaman, the cheek grows pure, the lips return to the smile of hope instead of the grin of greed, and the eyes that made innocence shrink and shudder with their yellow leer, grow childlike and sweet and faithful. The mammon-eyes, hitherto fixed on the earth, are lifted to meet their kind ; the lips that mumbled over figures and sums of gold, learn to say words of grace and tenderness. The truculent, repellent, self-satisfied face begins to look thoughtful and doubtful, as if searching for some treasure of whose whereabouts it had no certain sign. The face anxious, wrinkled, peering, troubled, on whose lines you read the dread of hunger, poverty, and nakedness, thaws into a

smile ; the eyes reflect in courage the light of the Father's care ; the back grows erect under its burden, with the assurance that the hairs of its head are all numbered. But the face can, with all its changes, set but dimly forth the rising from the dead which passes within. The heart which cared but for itself, becomes aware of surrounding thousands like itself, in the love and care of which it feels a dawning blessedness undreamt of before. From selfishness to love — is not this a rising from the dead ?

CXII.

The man whose ambition declares that his way in the world would be to subject everything to his desires, to bring every human care, affection, power, and aspiration to his feet — such a world it would be, and such a king it would have, if individual ambition might work its will ! if a man's opinion of himself could be made out in the world, degrading, compelling, oppressing, doing everything for his own glory — and such a glory ! but a pang of light strikes this man to the heart ; an arrow of truth, feathered with suffering, and loss, and dismay, finds out — the open joint in his armor, I was going to say — no, finds out the joint in the coffin where his heart lies festering in a death so dead that itself calls it life. He trembles, he awakes, he rises from the

dead. No more he seeks the slavery of all ; where can he find whom to serve ? how can he become if but a threshold in the temple of Christ, where all serve all, and no man thinks first of himself ? He to whom the mass of his fellows, as he massed them, was common and unclean, bows before every human sign of the presence of the making God. The sun, which was to him but a candle with which to search after his own ends, wealth, power, place, praise — the world, which was but the cavern where he thus searched — are now full of the mystery of loveliness, full of the truth of which sun and wind, and land and sea, are symbols and signs. From a withered old age of unbelief, the dim eyes of which refuse the glory of things a passage to the heart, he is raised up a child, full of admiration, wonder, and gladness. Everything is glorious to him ; he can believe, and therefore he sees. It is from the grave into the sunshine, from the night into the morning, from death into life. To come out of the ugly into the beautiful ; out of the mean and selfish into the noble and loving ; out of the paltry into the great ; out of the false into the true ; out of the filthy into the clean : out of the commonplace into the glorious ; out of the corruption of disease into the fine vigor and gracious movements of health ; in a word, out of evil into good — is not this a resurrection indeed — the resurrection of all, the resurrection of life ?

CXIII.

Every blessed moment in which a man bethinks himself that he has been forgetting his high calling, and sends up to the Father a prayer for aid ; every time a man resolves that what he has been doing he will do no more ; every time that the love of God, or the feeling of the truth, rouses a man to look, first up at the light, then down at the skirts of his own garments — that moment a divine resurrection is wrought in the earth. Yea, every time that a man passes from resentment to forgiveness, from cruelty to compassion, from hardness to tenderness, from indifference to carefulness, from selfishness to honesty, from honesty to generosity, from generosity to love — a resurrection, the bursting of a fresh bud of life out of the grave of evil, gladdens the eye of the Father watching His children.

“Awake, then, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

As the harvest rises from the wintry earth, so rise thou up from the trials of this world, a full ear in the harvest of Him who sowed thee in the soil, that thou mightest rise above it. As the summer rises from the winter, so rise thou from the cares of eating, and drinking, and clothing, into the fearless sunshine of confidence in the Father. As the morning rises out of the night, so rise thou from the darkness of ignorance to do the will of God in the daylight ; and as a man feels

that he is himself when he wakes from the troubled and grotesque visions of the night into the glory of the sunrise, even so wilt thou feel that when first thou knowest what thy life, the gladness of thy being, is. As from painful tossing in disease, rise into the health of well-being. As from the awful embrace of thy own dead body, burst forth in thy spiritual body. Arise thou, responsive to the indwelling will of the Father, even as thy body will respond to thy indwelling soul.

CXIV.

I thought of the story of the Lord of men, who arose by His own might, not alone from the body-tomb, but from all the death and despair of humanity, and lifted with Him our race, placing their tomb beneath their feet, and them in the sunny hope that belongs to them, and for which they were created—the air of their own freedom.

“But,” I said to myself, “this is ideal, and belongs to the race. Before it comes true for the race, it must be done in the individual. If it be true for the race, it can only be through its being attainable by the individual. There must be something in the story belonging to the individual. I will look at the individual Christ, and see how He arose.”

And then I saw that the Lord Himself was clasped in the love of the Father; that it was in the power of

mighty communion that the daily obedience was done; that besides the outward story of His devotion to men, there was the inward story — actually revealed to us men, marvellous as that is — the inward story of His devotion to His Father; of His speech to Him; of His upward look; of His delight in giving up to Him. And the answer to His prayers comes out in His deeds.

If, then, He is the captain of our salvation, the head of the body of the human church, I must rise by partaking in my degree of His food, by doing in my degree His work. I fell on my knees and I prayed to the Father. I rose, and, bethinking me of the words of the Son, I went and tried to do them. A new life awoke in me from that hour, feeble and dim, but yet life; and often as it has stopped growing, that has been my own fault. Where it will end, thank God, I cannot tell. But existence is an awful grandeur and delight.

Then I understood the state of my fellow-men, with all their ignorance, and hate, and revenge; some misled by passion, some blinded by dullness, some turned monomaniacs from a fierce sense of injustice done them; and I said:

“There is no way of helping them but by being good to them, and making them trust me. But in every one of them there lies a secret chamber, to which God has access from behind by a hidden door, while they know nothing of this chamber; and the other door towards

their own consciousness, is hidden by darkness and wrong, and ruin of all kinds. Sometimes they become dimly aware that there must be such a door. Some of us search for it, find it, turn back aghast ; while God is standing behind the door waiting to be found, and ready to hold forth the arms of eternal tenderness to him who will open and look. Some of us have torn the door open, and lo ! there is the Father, at the heart of us, at the heart of all things."

CXV.

The time of doubt and anxious questioning was far from over, but the time was long gone by—if in Robert's case it had ever been—when he could be like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed. He had ever one anchor of the soul, and he found that it held—the faith of Jesus, (I say the faith of Jesus, not his own faith in Jesus), the truth of Jesus, the life of Jesus. However his intellect might be tossed on the waves of speculation and criticism, he found that the word the Lord had spoken remained steadfast ; for in doing righteously, in loving mercy, in walking humbly, the conviction increased that Jesus knew the very secret of human life. Now and then some great vision gleamed across his soul, of the working of all things towards a far-off goal of simple obedience to a law of life, which God knew, and which His Son had justified

through sorrow and pain. Again and again the words of the Master gave him a peep into a region where all was explicable, where all that was crooked might be made straight, where every mountain of wrong might be made low, and every valley of suffering exalted. Ever and again some one of the dark perplexities of humanity began to glimmer with light in its inmost depth. Nor was he without those moments of communion when the creature is lifted into the secret place of the Creator.

Looking back to the time when it seemed that he cried and was not heard, he saw that God had been hearing, had been answering all the time; had been making him capable of receiving the gift for which he prayed. He saw that intellectual difficulty encompassing the highest operations of harmonizing truth, can no more affect their reality than the dullness of chaos disprove the motions of the wind of God over the face of its waters. He saw that any true revelation must come out of the unknown in God, through the unknown in man. He saw that its truths must rise in the man as powers of life, and that only as that life grows and unfolds, can the ever-lagging intellect gain glimpses of partial outlines fading away into the infinite; that, indeed, only in material things and the laws that belong to them, are outlines possible — even there, only in the picture of them which the mind that analyses them makes for itself, not in the things themselves

CXVI.

I could ill believe in a divine influence which did not take the person such as he was ; did not while giving him power from beyond him, leave his individuality uninjured, yea intensify it, subjecting the very means of its purification, the spread of the new leaven, to the laws of time and growth. To look at the thing from the other side, the genuineness of the man's reception of it, will be manifest in the meeting of his present conditions with the new thing — in the show of results natural to one of his degree of development. To hear a rude man utter his experience in the forms of cultivation, would be at once to suspect the mere glitter of a reflex, and to doubt an illumination from within. I repeat the genuine influence shows itself such in showing that it has laid hold of the very man, at the very stage of growth he had reached. The dancing of David before the ark, the glow of St. Stephen's face, and the wild gestures and rude songs of miners, and fishers and negroes, may all be signs of the presence of the same spirit in temples various. Children will rush and shout and hallo for the same joy which sends others of the family to weep apart.

Of course the one infallible test as to whether any such movement is of man without God, or of God within man, is the following life ; only a large space for fluctuation must be allowed where a whole world

of passions and habits has to be subjected to the will of God through the vice-gerency of a human will hardly or only just awakened, and as yet unconscious of itself.

CXVII.

The next morning the air was clear and fresh as a new-made soul. Bars of mottled clouds were bent across the eastern quarter of the sky, which lay like a great ethereal ocean ready for the launch of the ship of glory that was now gliding towards its edge. The lark sang of something greater than he could tell; the wind got up, whispered at it, and lay down to sleep again. The clouds that formed the shore of the upper sea were already burning from saffron into gold. A moment more and the first insupportable thing of light would shoot from behind the edge of that low, blue hill. The well-spring of day, fresh and exuberant as if now, first from the hoily will of the Father of Lights, gushed into the basin of the world, and the world, was more glad than tongue or pen can tell. The supernal light alone, dawning upon the human heart, can exceed the marvel of such a sunrise.

And shall life itself be less beautiful than one of its days? Do not believe it. Men call the shadow thrown upon the universe where their own dusky souls come between it and the eternal sun, life, and then mourn that it should be less bright than the hopes of

their childhood. Keep thou thy soul translucent that thou mayest never see its shadow ; at least never abuse thyself with the philosophy which calls that shadow life. Or rather would I say, become thou pure in heart, and thou shalt see God, whose vision alone is life.

CXVIII.

No worst thing ever done in the name of Christianity, no vilest corruption of the church, can destroy the eternal fact that the core of it is the heart of Jesus. Branches innumerable may have to be lopped off and cast into the fire, yet the word *I am the vine*, remaineth.

CXIX.

He did not know about him were folded the everlasting arms of the great, the one Ghost, which is the Death of death — the life and soul of all things and all thoughts. The Presence, indeed, was with him, and he felt it, but he knew it only as the wind and shadow, the sky and closed daisies : in all these things and the rest it took shape that it might come near him. Yea, the Presence was in his very soul, else he could never have rejoiced in friend or desired ghost to mother him : still he knew not the Presence. But it was drawing nearer and nearer to his knowledge — even in sun and air and night and cloud, in beast and flower

and herd-boy, until at last it would reveal itself to him, in him, as Life Himself. Then the man would know that in which the child had rejoiced.

CXX.

There is One who bringeth light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, humility out of wrong. Back to the Father's house we go with the sorrows and sins which instead of inheriting the earth, we gathered and heaped upon our weary shoulders, and a different Elder Brother from that angry one who would not receive the poor swine humbled prodigal, takes the burden from our shoulders, and leads us into the presence of the Good.

CXXI.

Not for years and years had Janet been to church ; she had long been unable to walk so far ; and having no book but the best, and no help to understand it but the highest, her faith was simple, strong, real, all-pervading. Day by day she pored over the great Gospel — I mean just the good news according to Matthew and Mark and Luke and John — until she had grown to be one of the noble ladies of the kingdom of heaven — one of those who inherit the earth, and are ripening to see God. For the Master, and His mind in hers, was her teacher. She had little or no theology save

what He taught her or rather what He is. And of any other than that, the less the better; for no theology, except the *Thou logos*, is worth the learning, no other being true. To know *Him* is to know God. And he only who obeys Him, does or can know Him; he who obeys Him cannot fail to know Him. To Janet, Jesus Christ was no object of so-called theological speculation, but a living man, who somehow or other, heard her when she called to Him and sent her the help she needed.

CXXII.

“Gien He be life o’ me, said Janet I hae no business wi’ ony mair o’t nor he gies me. I hae but to tak ae breath, be ’t hard, be ’t easy, ane at a time, an’ lat Him see to the neist himsel. Here I am, an here’s Him an’ at He winna lat’s ain wark come to ill, that I’m well sure o.’ An’ ye micht jist think to yersel’ Robert, at as ye *are* born intil the warl’, an here ye are auld intil ’t — ye may jist think, I say ’at hoo’, ye’re jist new-born an’ beginnin’ to grow yoong, an’ at that’s yer business. For naither you nor me can be that far frae hame, Robert, an whan we win there we’ll be yoong eneuch, I’m thinkin’; an’ no ower yoong, for we’ll hae what they say ye canna get doon here — a puir o’ auld heids upo’ yoong shooters.”

“Eh! but I wuss I may hae ye there, Janet, for I

kenna what I wad do wantin' ye. I wad be unco stray up yen'er gien I had to gang my lane, an' no you to refar till, 'at kens the w'ys o' the place."

"I ken no more about the w'ys o' the place nor yersel', Robert, though I'm thinkin' they'll be unco quaiet an' sensible, seein' 'at a' there maun be gentle fowk. It's eneuch to me 'at I'll be i' the hoose o' my Maister's father; an' my Maister was weel content to gang to that hoose; an' it maun be something by ordinar' 'at was fit for *Him*. But puir simple fowk like oorsel's 'ill hae no need to hing down the heid an' luik like gowks 'at disna ken a' the w'ys o' a muckle hoose 'at they hae never been intil i' their lives afore."

CXXIII.

Almost from the day, now many years ago, when because of distance and difficulty, she ceased to go to church, Janet had taken to her New Testament in a new fashion.

She possessed an instinctive power of discriminating character, which had its root and growth in the simplicity of her own: she had always been a student of those phases of humanity that came within her ken; she had a large share of that interest in her fellows and their affairs which is the very bloom upon ripe humanity: with these qualifications and the interpretative light afforded by her own calm

practical way of living, she came to understand men and their actions, especially where the latter differed from what might ordinarily have been expected, in a marvelous way: her faculty amounted almost to sympathetic contact with the very humanity. When therefore, she found herself in this remote spot where she could see so little of her kind, she began, she hardly knew by what initiation, to turn her study upon the story of our Lord's life. Nor was it long before it possessed her utterly, so that she concentrated upon it all the light and power of vision she had gathered from her experience of humanity. It ought not, therefore, to be wonderful how much she now understood of the true humanity—with what simple directness she knew what many of the words of the Son of Man meant, and perceived many of the germs of his individual actions. Hence it followed naturally that the thought of Him, and the hope of one day seeing Him, became her one informing idea. She was now such another as those women who ministered to him on the earth.

A certain gentle indifference she showed to things considered important, the neighbors attributed to weakness of character, and called *softness*; while the honesty, energy, and directness with which she acted upon insights they did not possess, they attributed to intellectual derangement. She was "over easy," they said

when the talk had been of prudence or worldly prospect ; she was "ower hard," they said, when the question had been of right and wrong.

CXXIV.

Labor, sleep, thought, labor again, seems to me to be the right order with those who, earning their bread by the sweat of the brow, would yet remember that man shall not live by bread alone. Were it possible that our mechanics could attend the institutions called by their name in the morning, instead of the evening, perhaps we should not find them so ready to degenerate into places of mere amusement. I am not objecting to the amusement ; only to cease to educate in order to amuse is to degenerate. Amusement is a good and a sacred thing ; but it is not on a par with education and, indeed, if it does not in any way further the growth of the higher nature, it cannot be called good at all.

CXXV.

In the spring, summer and autumn, Donal labored all day with his body, and in the evening as much as he could with his mind. Lover of nature as he was, however, more alive, indeed, than before to the delights of the country, and the genial companionship of terrene sights and sounds, scents and motions

he could not help longing for the winter and the city, that his soul might be freer to follow its paths. And yet what a season some of the labors of the field afforded him for thought ! To the student who cannot think without books, the easiest of such labors are a dull burden, or a distress ; but for the man in whom the wells have been unsealed, in whom the waters are flowing, the labor mingles gently and genially with the thought, and the plough he holds with his hands lays open to the sun and the air, more soils than one.

CXXVI.

They are not the best students who are most dependent on books. What can be got out of them is at best only material : a man must build his house for himself.

CXXVII.

Love is the first comforter, and where love and truth speak, the love will be felt where the truth is never perceived. Love, indeed, is the highest in all truth : and the pressure of a hand, a kiss, the caress of a child, will do more to save, sometimes, than the wisest argument, even rightly understood. Love alone is wisdom, love alone is power ; and where love, seems to fail, it is where self has stepped between and dulled the potency of its rays.

CXVIII.

Nothing, so much as humble ministration to your neighbors, will help you to that perfect love of God which casteth out fear; nothing but the love of God — that God revealed in Christ — will make you feel to love your neighbor aright: and the Spirit of God, which alone gives might for any good, will by these loves, which are life, strengthen you at last to believe in the light even in the midst of darkness: to hold the resolution formed in health when sickness has altered the appearance of everything around you: and to feel tenderly towards your fellow, even when you yourself are plunged in dejection or racked with pain.

CXXIX.

Where the struggle for one's own life is in abeyance, and the struggle for other life active, there the heart that God thought out and means to perfect, the pure love-heart of His humans, reveals itself truly, and is gracious to behold. For then the will of the individual sides divinely with His divine impulse, and his heart is unified in good. When the will of the man sides perfectly with the holy impulses in him, then all is well; for then his mind is one with the mind of his Maker; God and man are one.

CXXX.

Each relation of life has its peculiar beauty of holiness ; but that beauty is the expression of its essential truth, and the essence itself is so strong that it bestows upon its embodiment even the power of partial metamorphosis with all other vital relations. How many daughters have in the devotion of their tenderness become as mothers to their own fathers. Who has not known some sister more of a wife to a man than she for whose sake he neglected her? But it will take the loves of all the relations of life gathered in one, to shadow the love, which, in the kingdom of heaven, is recognized as one to each from each human being *per se*. It is for the sake of the essential human that all human relations and all forms of them exist—that we may learn what it is, and become capable of loving it aright.

CXXXI.

Silly youth and maidens count themselves martyrs of love, when they are but the pining witnesses to a delicious and entrancing selfishness. But do not mistake me through confounding, on the other hand the desire to be loved—which is neither wrong nor noble—any more than hunger is either wrong or noble—and the delight in being loved to be devoid

of which a man must be lost in an immeasurably deeper, in an evil, ruinous, yea, a fiendish selfishness. Not to care for love is the still worse reaction from the self-soiled and outward greed of love. Gibbie's love was a diamond among gem-loves. There are men whose love to a friend is less selfish than their love to the dearest woman; but Gibbie's was not a love to be less divine towards a woman than towards a man. One man's love is as different from another's as the one is himself different from the other. The love that dwells in one man is an angel, the love in the other is a bird, that in another a hog. Some would count worthless the love of a man who loved everybody. There would be no distinction in being loved by such a man!—and distinction as a guarantee of their own great growth, is what such seek. There are women who desire to be the *sole* object of a man's affection, and are all their lives devoured by unlawful jealousies. A love that had never gone forth upon human being, but themselves, would be to them the treasure to sell all that they might buy. And the man who bought such a love might in truth be all absorbed therein himself—just because he was the poorest of the creatures—therefore all absorbed in the poorest of loves. A heart has to be taught to love, and its first lesson, however learnt, no more makes it perfect in love than the A B C makes a *savant*. The man who loves most will love best. The

man who thoroughly loves God and his neighbor, is the only man who will love a woman ideally — who can love her with the love God thought of between them when He made man male and female. The man, I repeat, who loves God with his very life, and his neighbor as Christ loves him, is the man who alone is capable of grand, perfect, glorious love to any woman.

CXXXII.

Perfect love is the mother of all duties and all virtues, and needs not be admonished of her children; but not until love is perfected, may she, casting out fear, forget also duty.

CXXXIII.

The passion of love is but the vestibule — the pylon — to the temple of love. A garden lies between the pylon and the apytum. They that will enter the sanctuary must walk through the garden. But some start to see the roses already withering, sit down and weep and watch their decay, until at length the aged flowers hang drooping all around them, and lo! their hearts are withered also, and when they rise they turn their backs on the holy of holies, and their feet towards the gate.

Juliet was proud of her Paul, and loved him as much

as she was yet capable of loving. But she had thought they were enough for each other, and already, although she was far from acknowledging it to herself, she had in the twilight of her thinking began to doubt it. Nor can she be blamed for the doubt. Never man and woman yet succeeded in being all in all to each other.

It were presumption to say that a lonely God would be enough for Himself, seeing that we can know nothing of God but as He is our Father. What if the Creator Himself is sufficient to Himself in virtue of his self-existent *creatorship*? Let my reader think it out. The lower we go in the scale of creation, the more independent is the individual. The richer and more perfect each of a married pair is in the other relations of life, the more is each to the other. For us the children of eternal love, the very air our spirits breathe, and without which they cannot live, is the eternal life for us, the brothers and sisters of a courtless family, the very space in which our souls can exist, is the love of each other, and every soul of our kind.

CXXXIV.

When the human soul is not yet able to receive the vision of the God-man, God sometimes — might I not say always, — reveals Himself, or at least gives Himself, in some human being whose face, whose hands,

are the ministering of angels of this unacknowledged presence to keep alive the field of love, on the altar of the heart until God hath provided the sacrifice—that is until the soul is strong enough to draw it from the concealing thicket.

CXXXV.

I told my people that God had created all our worships, reverences, tendernesses, loves. That they had come out of His heart, and He had made them in us because they were in Him first. That otherwise He would not have cared to make them. That all that we could imagine of the wise, the lovely the beautiful, was in Him, only infinitely more of them than we could not merely imagine but understand, even if He did all He could to explain them to us, to make us understand them. That in Him was all the wise teaching of the best man ever known in the world and more; all the grace and gentleness and truth of the best child and more: all the tenderness and devotion of the truest type of womankind and more: for there is a love that passeth the love of woman, not the love of Jonathan to David, though David said so; but the love of God to the men and women whom He has made. Therefore, we must be all God's and all our aspirations, all our worships, all our honors, all our loves, must center in Him, the Best.

CXXXVI.

How few are there whose faith is simple and mighty in the Father of Jesus Christ, waiting to believe all that He will reveal to them! How many of those who talk of faith as the one needful thing, will accept as sufficient to the razing of the walls of partition between you and them, your heartiest declaration that you believe *in Him* with the whole might of your nature, lay your soul bare to the revelation of His spirit, and stir up your will to obey Him? And then comes *your* temptation—to exclude, namely, from your love and sympathy the weak and boisterous brethren who, after the fashion possible to them, believe in your Lord, because they exclude you and put as little confidence in your truth as in your insight. If you do know more of Christ than they, upon you lies the heavier obligation to be true to them as was St. Paul to the Judaizing Christians whom these so much resemble, who were his chief hindrance in the work his master had given him to do. In Christ we must forget Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, pope, and bishop, and pastor, and presbyter, creed, and interpretation, and theory. Careless of their opinions, we must be careful of ourselves—careful that we have salt in ourselves, and that the salt lose not its savor, that the old man, dead through Christ, shall not, vampire-like, creep from his grave and suck the blood of the saints, by whatever name

they be called, or however little they may yet have entered into the freedom of the Gospel that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.

CXXXVII.

A rough shaking of so-called faith, has been of endless service to many, chiefly by exposing the insecurity of all foundations of belief, save that which is discovered in digging with the spade of obedience. Well, indeed, is it, for all honest souls, to be thus shaken, who have been building upon doctrines concerning Christ, upon faith, upon experiences, upon anything but Christ, Himself, as revealed by Himself, and His spirit to all who obey Him, and so revealing the Father.

CXXXVIII.

She never imagined that words were necessary ; she believed that God knew her every thought, and that the moment she lifted up her heart, it entered into communion with Him ; but the very sound of the words she spoke seemed to make her feel nearer to the man, who being the eternal Son of the Father, yet had ears to hear, and lips to speak, like herself. To talk to Him aloud, also kept her thoughts together, helped her to feel the fact of the things she contemplated, as well as the reality of His presence.

CXXXIX.

A man may look another in the face for a hundred years and not know him! Men *have* looked Jesus Christ in the face, and not known either Him or His Father. It was needful that He should appear to begin the knowing of Him, but speedily was His visible presence taken away, that it might not become, as assuredly it would have become, a veil to hide from men the Father of their spirits. Do you long for the assurance of some sensible sign? Do you ask why no intellectual proof is to be had? I tell you that such would but delay, perhaps altogether impair for you that better, that best, that only vision, into which at last your world must blossom — such a contact, namely, with the heart of God Himself, such a perception of His being, and His absolute oneness with you, the child of His thought, the individuality softly parted from His presence and love as, by its own radiance, will sweep doubt away forever. Being then in the light and knowing it, the lack of intellectual proof concerning that which is too high for it will trouble you no more than would your inability to silence a metaphysician who declared that you had no real existence. It is for the sake of such vision as God would give, that you are denied such vision as you would have. The Father of our spirits is not content that we should know Him as we know each

other. There is a better, closer, nearer than any human way of knowing, and to that he is guiding us across all the swamps of our unteachableness, the seas of our faithlessness, the deserts of our ignorance. Is it so very hard that we should have to wait for that which we cannot yet receive? Shall we complain of the shadows cast upon our souls by the hand and the napkin polishing their mirrors to the receiving of the more excellent glory? Have patience, children of the Father. Pray always, and do not faint. The mists and the storms and the cold will pass; the sun and the sky are for evermore. There were no volcanoes and no typhoons but for the warm heart of the earth, the soft garment of the air, and the lordly sun over all. The most loving of you cannot imagine how one day the love of the Father will make you love even your own.

CXL.

It was strange and touching to see the sightless man busy about light for others. A marvellous symbol of faith he was — not only believing in sight, but in the mysterious, and to him altogether unintelligible, means, by which others saw! In thus lending his aid to a faculty in which he had no share, he himself followed the trail of the garments of Light, stooping ever and anon to lift and bear her skirts. He haunted

the steps of the unknown Power, and flitted about the walls of her temple, as we mortals haunt the borders of the immortal land, knowing nothing of what lies behind the unseen veil, yet believing in an unrevealed grandeur.

CXLI.

The same recipe that Gœthe gave for enjoyment of life applies equally to all work. "Do the thing that lies next you." That is all our business. Hurried results are worse than none. We must force nothing, but be partakers of the divine patience. How long it took to make the cradle! and we feel troubled that the baby Humanity is not reading Euclid and Plato, even that it is not understanding the Gospel of St. John! If there is one thing evident in the world's history, it is that God hasteneth not. All haste implies weakness. Time is as cheap as space and matter. What they call the church militant is only at drill yet, and a good many of the officers, too, not out of the awkward squad. In the drill, a man has to conquer himself, and move with the rest by individual attention to his own duty; to what mighty battle-fields the recruit may yet be led he does not know. Meantime he has nearly enough to do with his goose-step, while there is plenty of single combat, skirmish, and light-cavalry work, generally, to get him ready for whatever is to follow.

CXLII.

Just as I turned the corner, and the smell of the wood reached me, the picture so often associated in my mind with such a scene of human labor rose before me. I saw the Lord of Life bending over His bench, fashioning some lowly utensil for some housewife of Nazareth. And He would receive payment for it too ; for He at least could see no disgrace in the order of things that His Father had appointed. It is the vulgar mind that looks down on the earning, and worships the inheriting of money. How infinitely more poetic is the belief that our Lord did His work like any other honest man, than that straining after His glorification in the early centuries of the church by the invention of fables, even to the disgrace of His Father ! They say that Joseph was a bad carpenter, and our Lord had to work miracles to set the things right which he had made wrong ! To such a class of mind as invented these fables do those belong who think they honor our Lord when they judge anything human too common or too unclean for Him to have done.

CXLIII.

On Sundays, Malcolm was always more or less annoyed by the obtrusive presence of his arms and legs, accompanied by a vague feeling that, at any moment,

and no warning given, they might with some insane and irrepressible flourish, break the Sabbath on their own account, and degrade him in the eyes of his fellow-townsmen, who seemed all silently watching how he bore the restraints of the holy day. It must be conceded, however, that the discomfort had quite as much to do with his Sunday clothes as with the Sabbath-day, and that it interfered but little with an altogether peculiar calm, which appeared to him to belong in its own right to the Sunday, whether its light flowed in the sunny cataracts of June, or oozed through the spongy clouds of November. As he walked again to the Alton, or Old Town in the evening, the filmy floats of white in the lofty blue, the droop of the long, dark grass by the side of the short bright corn, the shadows pointing, like all lengthening shadows, towards the quarter of hope, the yellow glory filling the air and paling the green below, the unseen larks hanging aloft — like air-pitcher plants that overflowed in song — like electric jars emptying themselves of the sweet thunder of bliss in the flashing of wings and the trembling of melodious throats; these were indeed of the summer, but the cup of rest had been poured out upon them; the Sabbath brooded like an embodied peace over the earth, and under its wings they grew seven-fold peaceful — with a peace that might be felt, like the hand of a mother pressed upon the half-sleeping child.

CXLIV.

She had not yet come to see that in whatever trouble a man may find himself, the natural thing being to make his request known, his brother may heartily tell him to pray? Why, what can a man do but pray? He is here—helpless: and his Origin, the breather of his soul, his God, may be somewhere. And what else should he pray about but the thing that troubles him? Not surely the thing that does not trouble him! What is the trouble there for, but to make him cry? It is the pull of God at his being. Let a man only pray. Prayer is the sound to which not merely is the ear of the Father open, but for which that ear is listening. Let him pray for the thing he thinks he needs: for what else, I repeat, can he pray? Let a man cry for that in whose loss life is growing black: the heart of the Father is open. Only let the man know that, even for his prayer, the Father will not give him a stone. But let the man pray, and let God see to it how to answer him. If in his childishness and ignorance he should ask for a serpent, He will not give him a serpent. But it may yet be the Father will find some way of giving him his heart's desire. God only knows how rich God is in power of gift. See what He has done to make Himself able to give to His own heart's desire. The giving of His Son was as the knife

with which He would divide Himself among His children. He knows, He only, the heart, the needs, the deep desires, the hungry eternity, of each of them all. Therefore let every man ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not—and see at least what will come of it.

But he will speak like one of the foolish if he say thus, “Let God hear me, and give me my desire, and I will trust in Him.” That would be to tempt the Lord his God. If a father gives his children their will, instead of His, they may well turn on him again and say :

“Was it then the part of a father to give me a scorpion because, not knowing what it was, I asked for it? I besought him for a fancied joy, and lo! it is a sorrow for evermore!”

But it may be that sometimes God indeed does so, and to such a possible complaint has this reply in himself; “I gave thee what thou wouldst, because not otherwise could I teach the stiff-necked his folly. Hadst thou been patient, I would have made the thing a joy ere I gave it thee; I would have changed the scorpion into a golden beetle, set with rubies and sapphires. Have thou patience now.’

CXLV.

Every sin discovered in one's own soul must be a

pledge of renewed bliss in its removing. And when the thought came of what St. Paul had said somewhere "whatever is not of faith is sin"—I thought what a weight of sin had to be lifted from the earth, and how blessed it might be. But what could I do for it? I could just begin with myself, and pray God for that inward light which is His spirit, that so I might see Him in everything and rejoice in everything as His gift, and then all things would be holy, for whatsoever is of faith must be the opposite of sin; and that was my part towards heaving the weight of sin, which, like myriads of gravestones, was pressing the life out of us men, off the whole world.

CXLIV.

I suspect we shall find some day that the loss of the human paradise consists chiefly in the closing of the human eyes; that at least, far more of it than people think remains about us still, only we are so filled with foolish desires and evil cares that we cannot see or hear, cannot even smell or taste the pleasant things round about us. We have need to pray in regard to the right receiving of the things of the senses even, "Lord open thou our hearts to understand Thy Word," for each of these things is as certainly a word of God as Jesus is the word of God.

CXLVII.

If it is right to thank God for a beautiful thought — I mean a thought of strength and grace giving one fresh life and hope — why should one be less bold to thank Him when such thoughts arise in plainer shape — take such vivid forms to the mind that they seem to come through the doors of the eyes into the vestibule of the brain, and thence into the inner chambers of the soul?

CXLVIII.

If so much of our life is actually spent in dreaming, there must be some place in our literature for what corresponds to dreaming. Even in this region, we cannot step beyond the boundaries of our nature. I delight in reading Lord Bacon, now; but one of Jean Paul's dreams will often give me more delight than one of Bacon's best paragraphs. It depends upon the mood. Some dreams, like those in poetry or in sleep, arouse individual states of consciousness, altogether different from any of our waking moods, and not to be recalled by any mere effort of will. All our being, for the moment, has a new and strange coloring. We have another kind of life. I think myself, our life would be much poorer without our dreams; a thousand

rainbow-tints and combinations would be gone ; music and poetry would lose many an indescribable exquisiteness and tenderness. You see, I like to take our dreams seriously, as I would even our fun. For I believe that those new mysterious feelings that come to us in sleep, if they be only from dreams of a richer grass and a softer wind than we have known awake, are indications of wells of feeling and delight which have not yet broken out of their hiding-places in our souls, and are only to be suspected from these wings of fairy green that spring up in the high places of our sleep.

CXLIX.

There never was a vagary that uplifted the soul, or made the grand words flow from the gates of speech, that had not its counterpart in truth itself. Man can imagine nothing, even in the clouds of the air, that God has not done, or is not doing. Then, as the cloudy giant yields, and is “shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind,” so is each of us borne onward to an unseen destiny — a glorious one if we will but yield to the Spirit of God that bloweth where it listeth — with a grand listing — coming whence we know not, and going whither we know not. The very clouds of the air are hung up as dim pictures of the thoughts and history of man.

CL.

The direction in which his imagination ran forward was always that in which his reason pointed; and so long as Gibbie's fancies were bud-blooms upon his obedience, his imagination could not be otherwise than in harmony with his reason. Imagination is a poor root, but a worthy blossom, and in a nature like Gibbie's its flowers cannot fail to be lovely. For no outcome of a man's nature is so like himself as his imagination, except it be his fancies, indeed. Perhaps his imagination shows what he is meant to be, his fancies what he is making of himself.

CLI.

I walked out in the snow. Since the storm, it had fallen again, quietly and plentifully; and now in the sunlight, the world—houses and trees, ponds and rivers—was like a creation more than blocked out, but far from finished—in marble.

“And this,” I said to myself, as I regarded the wondrous loveliness with which the snow had at once clothed and disfigured the bare branches of the trees, “this is what has come of the chaos of falling flakes! To this repose of beauty has the storm settled and sunk! Will it not be so with our mental storms as well?”

But here the figure displeased me ; for those were not the true, right shapes of the things ; and the truth does not stick to things, but shows itself out of them.

“This lovely show,” I said, “is the result of a busy fancy. This white world is the creation of a poet such as Shelley, in whom the fancy was too much for the intellect. Fancy settles upon anything ; half destroys its form, half beautifies it with something that is not its own. But the true creative imagination, the form-seer, and the form-bestower, falls like the rain in the spring night, vanishing amid the roots of the trees ; not settling upon them in clouds of wintry white, but breaking forth from them in clouds of summer green.”

CLII.

It is not the high summer alone that is God's. The winter also is His. And into His winter He came to visit us. And all man's winters are His — the winter of our poverty, the winter of our sorrow, the winter of our unhappiness — even the “winter of our discontent.” Winter does not belong to death, although the outside of it looks like death. Beneath the snow the grass is growing. Below the frost the roots are warm and alive. Winter is only a spring too weak and feeble for us to see that it is living. The cold does for all things what the gardener has sometimes to do for valuable

trees—he must half kill them before they will bear any fruit. Winter, is in truth the small beginning of spring.

CLIII.

Like lovers they walked out together, with eyes only for each other, for the good news had made them shy—through the lane, into the cross street, and out into Pine street, along which they went westward, meeting the gaze of the low sun, which wrapt them around in a veil of light and dark, for the light made their eyes dark, so that they seemed feeling their way out of the light into the shadow.

“This is like life,” said the pastor, looking down at the precious face beside him: “our eyes can best see from under the shadow of afflictions.”

“I would rather it were from under the shadow of God’s wings,” replied Dorothy, timidly.

“So it is! so it is! Afflictions are but the shadow of His wings,” said her father, eagerly. “Keep there my child, and you will never need the afflictions I have needed. I have been a hard one to save.”

But the child thought within herself, “Alas! father! you have never had any afflictions which you or I either could not bear tenfold better than what I have to bear.”

She was perhaps right. Only she did not know that when she got through, all would be disfigured with

the light of her resurrection, just as her father's poverty now was in the light of his plenty.

CLIV.

While the cup of blessing may and often does run over, I doubt if the cup of suffering is ever more than filled to the brim.

CLV.

SHALL THE DEAD PRAISE THEE?

I cannot praise Thee. By his instrument
The organ master sits, nor moves a hand;
For see the organ-pipes o'erthrown and bent,
Twisted and broke, like corn-stalks tempest-fanned!

I well could praise Thee for a flower, a dove;
But not for life that is not life in me;
Not for a being that is less than love —
A barren shoal half lifted from a sea.

And for the land whence no wind bloweth ships,
And all my living dead ones thither blown —
Rather I'd kiss no more their precious lips,
Than carry them a heart so poor and prone.

Yet I do bless Thee Thou art what Thou art,
That Thou dost know Thyself what Thou dost know —
A perfect, simple, tender, rhythmic heart,
Beating Thy blood to all in bounteous flow.

And I can bless Thee too, for every smart,
For every disappointment, ache, and fear ;
For every hook Thou fixest in my heart,
For every burning cord that draws me near.

But prayer these wake ; not song. Thyself I crave.
Come Thou or all Thy gifts away I fling.
Thou silent, I am but an empty grave :
Think to me, Father, and I am a king.

Then, like the wind-stirred bones, my pipes shall quake,
The air burst, as from burning house the blaze,
And swift contending harmonies shall shake
Thy windows with a storm of jubilant praise.

Thee praised, I haste me humble to my own —
Then love, not shame shall bow me at their feet,
Then first and only to my stature grown,
Fulfilled of love, a servant all complete.

CLVI.

Many men who have courage, are dependent on ignorance, and a low state of the moral feeling for that courage; and a farther progress towards the development of the higher nature would, for a time at least, entirely overthrow it. Nor could such loss of courage be rightly designated by the name of cowardice.

CLVII.

The direst foe of courage is the fear itself, not the

object of it ; and the man who can overcome his own terror is a man and more.

CLVIII.

There are victories far worse than defeats ; and to overcome an angel too gentle to put out all his strength, and ride away in triumph on the back of a devil, is one of the poorest.

CLIX.

My own conviction is, that if a man would but bend his energies to *live*, if he would but try to be a true that is, a god-like man, in all his dealings with his fellows, a genuine neighbor and not a selfish unit, he would open such channels for the flow of the Spirit, as no amount of even honest and so-called successful preaching could.

CLX.

LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE.

Sometimes O Lord, Thou lightest in my head
A lamp that well might Pharos all the lands ;
Anon the light will neither burn nor spread,
Shrouded in danger gray the beacon stands.

A Pharos? Oh, dull brain ! Oh, poor quenched lamp,
Under a bushel, with an earthy smell !
Moldering it lies, in rust and eating damp
While the slow oil keeps oozing from its cell !

For me it were enough to be a flower
Knowing its root in 'Thee was somewhere hid —
To blossom at the far appointed hour.
And fold in sleep when Thou, my Nature, bid.

But hear my brethren crying in the dark!
Light up my lamp that it may shine abroad,
Fain would I cry — See brothers ! Sisters, mark !
This is the shining of light's father, God.

CLXI.

It is much easier to persuade men that God cares for certain observances, than that He cares for simple honesty and truth, and gentleness and loving-kindness. The man who would shudder at the idea of a rough word of the description commonly called swearing, will not even have a twinge of conscience after a whole morning of ill-tempered sullenness, capricious scolding, villainously unfair animadversion, or surly cross-grained treatment, generally, of wife and children ! Such a man will omit neither family worship, nor a sneer at his neighbor. He will neither milk his cow on the first day of the week without a Sabbath mask on his face, nor remove it while he waters the milk for his customers.

CLXII.

I fancy that until a man loves space, he will never be at peace in a place. At least so I have found it. I am content if you but give me room. All space to me throbs with being and life ; and the loveliest spot on the earth seems but the compression of space till the meaning shines out of it, as the fire flies out of the air when you drive it close together.

CLXIII.

That man only who rises above the small yet mighty predilection, who sets the self of his own consciousness behind his back, and cherishes only the self of the Father's thought, the anger that beholds the eternal face, that man only is a free and noble being, he only breathes the air of the infinite.

CLXIV.

All the doors that lead inwards to the secret place of the Most High, are doors outwards—out of self, out of smallness—out of wrong.

CLXV.

I presume that in a right condition of our nervous

nature, instead of our being, as some would tell us, less exposed to the influences of nature, we should in fact, be altogether open to them. Our nerves would be a thoroughfare for nature in all and each of her moods and feelings, stormy or peaceful, sunshiny or sad. The true refuge from the slavery to which this would expose us, the subjection of man to circumstance, is to be found, not in the deadening of the nervous constitution, or in a struggle with the influences themselves, but in the strengthening of the moral and refining of the spiritual nature ; so that, as the storms rave through the vault of heaven, without breaking its strong arches with their winds, or staining its ethereal blue with their rain-clouds, the soul of man should keep clear and steady and great, holding within it its own feelings and even passions, knowing that let them moan or rave as they will, they cannot touch the nearest verge of the empyrean dome, in whose region they have their birth and being.

CLXVI.

Relish may be called the digestion of the palate ; interest, the digestion of the inner ears ; both significant of further digestion to follow. The food thus relished may not be the best food ; and yet it may be the best food for the patient, because he feels no repugnance to it, and can digest and assimilate, as

well as swallow it. For my part I believe in no cramming, bodily or mental. I think nothing learned without interest can be of the slightest after-benefit; and although the effort may comprise a moral good, it involves a considerable intellectual injury. All I have said applies with still greater force to religious teaching.

CLXVII.

I can no more describe the motion aroused in my mind by a gray cloud, parting over a gray stone, by the smell of a sweet pea, by the sight of one of those long, upright pennons of striped grass, with the homely name, than I can tell what the glory of God is who made these things. The man whose poetry is like nature in this, that it produces individual, incommunicable moods and conditions of mind — a sense of elevated, tender, marvellous and evanescent existence — must be a poet, indeed. Every dawn of such a feeling is a light-brushed bubble, rendering visible for a moment the dark, unknown sea of our being which lies beyond the lights of our consciousness, and is the stuff and the region of our eternal growth. But think what language must become before it will tell dreams! — before it will convey the delicate shades of fancy that come and go in the brain of a child! — before it will let a man know wherein one face differeth from another face in glory! I suspect, however, that for

such purposes it is rather music than articulation that is needful ; that with a hope of these finer results, the language must rather be turned into music, than logically executed.

CLXVIII.

It is a ruinous misjudgment — too contemptible to be asserted, but not too contemptible to be acted upon, that the end of poetry is publication. Its true end is to help first the man who makes it, along the path to the truth : help for other people may or may not be in it : that, if it become a question at all, must be an after one. To the man who has it, the gift is invaluable ; and in proportion as it helps him to be a better man, it is of value to the whole world ; but it may, in itself, be so nearly worthless, that the publishing of it would be more for harm than good. Ask any one who has had to perform the unenviable duty of editor to a magazine : he will corroborate what I say — that the quantity of verse good enough to be its own reward, but without the smallest claim to be uttered to the world, is enormous.

CLXIX.

Was music ever born of torture, of misery ? It is only when the cloud of sorrow is sinking in the sun-rays that the song-larks awake and ascend. A glory

of some sort must fringe the skirts of any sadness, the light of the sorrowing soul itself must be shed upon it, and the cloud must be far enough removed to show the reflected light, before it will yield any of the stuff of which songs are made. And this light that gathers in song, what is it but hope behind the sorrow—hope so little recognized as such that it is often called despair? It is reviving and not decay that sings even the saddest of songs.

CLXX.

Her music was old-fashioned of course ; but I have a fancy that perhaps the older the music one learns first, the better ; for the deeper is thereby the rooting of that which will have the atmosphere of the age to blossom in. But then to every lover of the truth, a true thing is dearer because it is old-fashioned, and dearer because it is new-fashioned ; and true music like true love, like all truth, laughs at the god Fashion because it knows him to be but an ape.

CLXXI.

How true must be the bliss up to which the intense realities of sorrows are needful to force the way for the faithless heart and the feeble will ! Lord, like the people of old, we need yet the background of the

thunder-cloud against which to behold Thee, but one day the only darkness around Thy dwelling will be the too much of Thy brightness. For Thou art the perfection which every heart sighs towards, no mind can attain unto. If Thou wast one whom created mind could embrace, Thou wouldst be too small for those whom Thou hast made in Thine own image, the infinite creatures that seek their God, a being to love and know infinitely. For the created to know perfectly would be to be damned forever in the nutshell of the finite. He who is his own cause alone can understand perfectly and remain infinite, for that which is known and that which knows are in Him the same infinitude.

CLXXII.

You close your doors and brood over your own miseries, and the wrongs people have done you ; whereas, if you would but open those doors, you might come out into the light of God's truth, and see that His heart is as clear as sunlight towards you. You won't believe this, and therefore naturally you can't quite believe that there is a God at all : for, indeed a being that was not all light would be no God at all. If you would but let Him teach you, you would find your perplexities melt away like the snow in spring, till you could hardly believe you had ever felt them. No arguing will convince you of a God ; but let Him once

come in, and all argument will be tenfold useless to convince you that there is no God.

CLXXIII.

Anything that gives objectivity to trouble, that lifts the cloud so far that, if but for a moment, it shows itself a cloud, instead of being felt an enveloping, penetrating, palsyng mist, setting it where the mind can in its turn prey upon it, can play with it, paint it, may come to sing of it, is a great help towards what health may yet be possible for the troubled soul.

CLXXIV.

There is no dignity but of service. How different the whole notion of training is now from what it was in the middle ages! Service was honorable then. No doubt we have made progress as a whole, but in some things we have degenerated sadly. The first thing taught then was how to serve. No man could rise to the honor of knighthood without service. A nobleman's son even had to wait on his father, or to go into the family of another nobleman and wait upon him as a page, standing behind his chair at dinner. This was an honor. No notion of degradation was in it. It was a necessary step to higher honor. And

what was the next higher honor? To be set free from service? No. To serve in the harder service of the field; to be a squire to some noble knight; to tend his horse, to clean his armor, to see that every rivet was sound, every buckle true, every strap strong; to ride behind him and carry his spear, and if more than one attacked him, to rush to his aid. This service was the more honorable because it was harder, and was the next step to higher honor yet. And what was this higher honor? That of knighthood. Wherein did this knighthood consist? The very word means simply *service*. And for what was the knight thus waited upon by the squire? That he might be free to do as he pleased? No; but that he might be free to be the servant of all. By being a squire first, the servant of one, he learned to rise to the higher rank, that of servant of all. His horse was tended, his armor observed, his sword and spear and shield held to his hand, that he might have no trouble looking after himself, but might be free, strong, unwearied, to shoot like an arrow to the rescue of any and every one who needed his ready aid. There was a grand heart of Christianity in that old chivalry, notwithstanding all its abuses, which must be no more laid to its charge, than the burning of Jews and heretics to Christianity. It was the lack of it, not the presence of it, that occasioned the abuses that co-existed with it.

CLXXV.

It is true that the business God gives a man to do, may be said to be the peculiar walk in life into which he is led, but that is only as distinguishing it from another man's peculiar business. God gives us all our business, and the business which is common to humanity is more peculiarly God's business than that which is one man's and not another's—because it lies nearer the root, and is essential. It does not matter whether a man is a farmer or a physician, but it greatly matters whether he is a good son, a good husband, and so on. Oh if the world could but be brought to believe—the world did I say?—if the best men in the world could only see as God sees it, that service is in itself the noblest exercise of human powers, if they could see that God is the hardest worker of all, and that His nobility are those who do the most service, surely it would alter the whole aspect of the church. Menial offices, for instance, would soon cease to be talked of with that contempt which shows that there is no true recognition of the fact that the same principle runs through the highest duty and the lowest—that the lowest work which God gives a man to do, must be in its nature noble, as certainly noble as the highest. This would destroy condescension, which is the rudeness, yea impertinence, of the higher, as it would destroy insolence, which is the rudeness

of the lower. He who recognized the dignity of his own lower office, would thereby recognize the superiority of the higher office, and would be the last either to envy or degrade it. He would see it in his own — only higher, only better, and revere it.

CLXXVI.

While nobody can do without the help of the Father any more than a new-born babe could of itself live and grow to a man, yet in the giving of that help the very fatherhood of the Father finds it one gladsome labor; for that the Lord came; for that the world was made; for that we were born into it; for that God lives and loves like the most loving man or woman on earth, only infinitely more and in other ways and kinds besides, which we cannot understand; and therefore to be a man is the soul of eternal jubilation.

CLXXVII.

The tendency of the present age is to blot from the story of every-day life all reminders of the ordinary human relations, as commonplace and insignificant, and to mingle all society in one concourse of atoms in which the only distinctions shall be those of rank; whereas the sole power to keep social intercourse from growing stale is the recognition of the immortal and

true in all the simple human relations. Then we look upon all men with reverence, and find ourselves safe and at home in the midst of divine intents, which may be violated and striven with, but can never be escaped, because the will of God is the very life and well-being of His creatures.

CLXXVIII.

Imagine a young fisherman meditating—as he wandered with bent head through the wilder woods on the steep banks of the burn, or the little green levels which it overflowed in winter—of all possible subjects, what analogy there might be twixt the body and the soul in respect of derivation—whether the soul was traduced as well as the body!—as his material form came from the forms of his father and mother, did his soul come from their souls? or did the Maker, as at the first he breathed His breath into the form of Adam, still, at some crisis unknown in its creation, breathe into each form the breath of individual being? If the latter theory were the true, then, be his earthly origin what it might, he had but to shuffle off this mortal coil to walk forth a clean thing, as a prince might cast off the rags of an enforced disguise, and set out for the land of his birth. If the former were the true, then the well-spring of his being was polluted, nor might he by any death fling aside his degradation, or show

himself other than defiled in the eyes of the old dwellers in "those high countries" where all things seem as they are, and are as they seem.

One day when, these questions fighting in his heart, he had for the hundredth time arrived thus far, all at once it seemed as if a soundless voice in the depth of his soul, replied —

"Even then—should the well-spring of thy life be polluted with vilest poisons such as, in Persian legends, the lips of the lost are doomed to drink with loathing inconceivable—the well is but the utterance of the water, not the source of its existence; the rain is its father and comes from the sweet heavens. Thy soul, however it became known to itself, is from the pure heart of God, whose thought of thee is older than thy being—is its first and eldest cause. Thy essence cannot be defiled, for in Him it is eternal."

Even with the thought the horizon of his life began to clear; a light came out on the far edge of its ocean—a dull and sombre yellow, it is true, and the clouds hung yet heavy over sea and land, while miles of vapor hid the sky; but he could now believe there might be a blue beyond, in which the sun lorded it with majesty.

CLXXIX.

It is the human we love in each other—and the human is the Christ. What we do not love is the

devilish—no more the human than the morrow's wormy mass was the manna of God. To be for the Christ in a man is the highest love you can give him ; for in the unfolding alone of that Christ can the individuality, the genuine peculiarity of the man, the man himself, be perfected, the flower of his nature be developed, in its own distinct loveliness, beauty, splendor, and brought to its idea.

CLXXX.

The thing that divided them was the original misunderstanding, which lies, deep and black as the pit between every soul and the soul next it, where self and not God is the final thought. The gulf is forever crossed by "bright shoots of everlastingness," the lightnings of involuntary affection ; but nothing less than the willed love of an infinite devotion will serve to close it ; any moment it may be lighted up from beneath and the horrible distance between them laid bare. Into this gulf it was that, with absolute gift of Himself, the Lord, doing like His Father, cast Himself ; and by such devotion alone can His disciples become fellow workers with Him, help to slay the evil self in the world, and rouse the holy self to like sacrifice that the true, the eternal life of men may arise jubilant and crowned. Then is the old man of claims,

and rights, and disputes, and fears re-born a child, whose are all things and who claims and fears nothing.

CLXXXI.

Conscious, persistent wrong may harden and thicken the gauze to a quilted armor, but even through that the sound of its teeth may wake up Don Worm, the conscience, and then is the baser nature between the fell incensed points of mighty opposites. It avails a man little to say he does not believe this or that, if the while he cannot rest because of some word spoken. True speech, as well as true Scripture, is given by inspiration of God; it goes forth on the wind of the Spirit, with the ministry of fire. The sun will shine, and the wind will blow, the floods will beat, and the fire will burn, until the yielding soul re-born into childhood, spreads forth its hands and rushes to the Father.

CLXXXII.

When people want to walk their own way without God, God lets them try it. And then the devil gets a hold of them. But God won't let him keep them. As soon as they are wearied in the "greatness of their way," they begin to look about for a Saviour. And then they find God ready to pardon, ready to help, not breaking the bruised reed — leading them on His

own self manifest—with whom no man can fear any longer, Jesus Christ, the righteous lover of men—their Elder Brother—one to help them and take their part against the devil, the world, and the flesh, and all the rest of the wicked powers. So you see God is tender—just like the prodigal son's father—only with this difference, that God has millions of prodigals, and never gets tired of going out to meet them and welcome them back, every one as if He were the only prodigal son He had ever had.

CLXXXIII.

Wherever the water of life is received it sinks and softens and hollows, until it reaches, far down, the springs of life there also that come straight from the eternal hills, and thenceforth there is in that soul a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

CLXXXIV.

How many people would like to be good, if only they might be good without taking trouble about it. They do not like goodness well enough to hunger and thirst after it, or to sell all that they have that they may buy it; they will not batter at the gate of the kingdom of heaven; but they look with pleasure on this or that aerial castle of righteousness, and

think it would be rather nice to live in it. They do not know that it is goodness all the time their very being is pining after, and that they are starving their nature of its necessary food.

CLXXXV.

One cannot help sometimes feeling that the only chance for certain persons is to commit some fault sufficient to shame them out of the self-satisfaction in which they burrow. A fault, if only it be great and plain enough to exceed their powers of self-justification, may then be, of God's mercy, not indeed an angel of light to draw them, but verily a goblin of darkness to terrify them out of themselves.

CLXXXVI.

Sometimes two persons are like two drops running alongside of each other down a window-pane : one marvels how it is they can so long escape running together. Persons fit to be bosom friends will meet and part for years, and never say much beyond "good-morning" and "good-night."

CLXXXVII.

Nothing makes a man strong like a call upon him

for help — a fact which points at a unity more delicate and close, and profound than heart has yet perceived. It is but “a modern instance” how a mother, if she be but a hen, becomes bold as a tigress for her perilled offspring. A stranger will fight for the stranger who puts his trust in him. The most foolish of men will search his musty brain to find wise saws for his boy. An anxious man, going to his friend to borrow, may return having lent him instead. The man who has found nothing yet in the world save food for the hard sharp, clear intellect, will yet cast an eye around the universe to see if perchance there may not be a God somewhere for the hungering heart of his friend.

CLXXXVIII.

No one holds the truth, or can hold it, in one and the same thought but God. Our human life is often, at best, but an oscillation between the extremes which together make the truth; and it is not a bad thing in a family, that the pendulums of father and mother should differ in movement so far, that when the one is at one extremity of the swing, the other should be at the other, so that they meet only in the point of *indifference*, in the middle; that the predominant tendency of the one should not be the predominant tendency of the other.

CLXXXIX.

The bond cannot be very close between father and child, when the father has forsaken his childhood. The bond between any two is the one in the other: it is the father in the child and the child in the father that reach to each other eternal hands.

CXC.

As the thought of water to the thirsty soul, for it is the soul far more than the body, that thirsts even for the material water, such is the thought of home to the wanderer in a strange country. As the weary soul pines for sleep, and every heart for the cure of its own bitterness, so my heart and soul had often pined for their home. Did I know, I asked myself, where or what that home was? It could consist in no change of place or of circumstance; no mere absence of care; no accumulation of repose; no blessed communion even with those whom my soul loved; in the midst of it all I should be longing for a homelier home—one into which I might enter with a sense of infinitely more absolute peace than a conscious child could know in the arms, upon the bosom of his mother. In the closest contact of human soul with human soul, when all the atmosphere of thought was rosy with love, again and yet again on the far horizon would the dim, lurid

flame of unrest shoot for a moment through the enchanted air, and Psyche would know that not yet had she reached her home. There is but one home for us all and when we find—in proportion as each of us finds—that home, shall we be gardens of delight to each other—little chambers of rest, galleries of pictures—wells of water. For what is this home? God himself. His thoughts, His will, His love, His judgments, are man's home. To think His thoughts, to choose His will, to love His loves, to judge His judgments, and thus to know that He is in us, with us, is to be at home.

And to pass through the valley of the shadow of death is the way home, but only thus, that as all changes have hitherto led us nearer to this home, the knowledge of God, so this greatest of all outward changes—for it is but an outward change—will surely usher us into a region where there will be fresh possibilities of drawing nigh in heart, soul and mind to the Father of us. It is the father, the mother, that makes for the child his home.

CXCI.

The youth who thinks the world his oyster, and opens it forthwith, finds no pearl therein.

What is this *nimbus* about the new? Is the marvel a mockery? Is the slime that of demon-gold? No.

It is a winged glory that alights beside the youth ; and having gathered his eyes to itself, flits away to a further perch ; there alights, there shines, thither entices. With outstretched hands the child of earth follows, to fall weeping at the foot of the gray, disenchanted thing. But beyond and again beyond, shines the lapwing of heaven — not, as a faithless generation thinks, to delude like them, but to lead the seeker home to the nest of the glory.

CXCII.

Is it necessary to admit that we must have had a conscious life before this life, to find meaning in the words —

“ But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home ? ”

Is not all the good in us His image? Imperfect and sinful as we are, is not all the foundation of our being His image? Is not the sin all ours, and the life in us all God's? We cannot be the creatures of God, without partaking of His nature. Every motion of our conscience, every admiration of what is pure and noble, is a sign and result of this. Is not every self-accusation a proof of the presence of His spirit. That comes not of ourselves—that is not without Him. These are the clouds of glory we come trailing from Him. All feelings of beauty and peace and love—

liness and right and goodness, we trail with us from our home. God is the only home of the human soul.

CXCIII.

All that is physical is put, or is in the process of being put, under the feet of the spiritual. Do not mistake me. I do not say you can make yourself merry or happy when you are in a physical condition which is contrary to such mental condition. But you can withdraw from it—not all at once ; but by practice and effort, you can learn to withdraw from it, refusing to allow your judgments and actions to be ruled by it. You can climb up out of the fogs, and sit quiet in the sunlight on the hillside of faith. You cannot be merry down below in the fog, for there is the fog ; but you can, every now and then, fly with the dove-wings of the soul up into the clear, to remind yourself that all this passes away, is but an accident, and that the sun shines always, although it may not at any given moment be shining on you. “What does that matter ?” you will learn to say. “It is enough for me to know that the sun does shine, and that this is only a weary fog that is round about me for the moment. I shall come out into the light beyond, presently.” This is faith—faith in God, who is the light, and is all in all. I believe that the most glorious instances of calmness in suffering, are thus achieved ; that the

sufferers really do not suffer what one of us would, if thrown into their physical condition, without the refuge of their spiritual condition as well ; for they have taken refuge in the inner chamber. Out of the spring of their life a power goes forth that quenches the flames of the furnace of their suffering, so far at least that it does not touch the deep life, cannot make them miserable, does not drive them from the possession of their soul in patience, which is the divine citadel of the suffering.

CXCIV.

In his hopeful moods, let a man put on his singing robes, and chant aloud the words of gladness to his fellows ; in his hours of hopelessness, let him utter his thoughts only to his inarticulate violin, or in the evanescent sounds of any other stringed instrument ; let him commune with his own heart, on his bed, and be still ; let him speak to God face to face, if he may — only he cannot do that and continue hopeless — but let him not sing aloud in such a mood into the hearts of his fellows, for he cannot do them much good thereby. If it were a fact that there is no hope, it would not be a *truth*. No doubt, if it were a fact, it ought to be known ; but who will dare be confident that there is no hope ? Therefore, I say, let the hope-

less moods, at least, if not the hopeless men, be silent.

CXC.V.

Many feelings are simply too good to last — using the phrase not in the unbelieving sense in which it is generally used, expressing the conviction that God is a hard Father, fond of disappointing His children ; but to express the fact that intensity and endurance cannot yet co-exist in the human economy. But the virtue of a mood depends by no means on its immediate presence. Like any other experience, it may be believed in, and, in the absence which leaves the mind free to contemplate it, work even more good than in its presence.

CXC.VI.

“There are many feelings in us that are not able to get up-stairs the moment we call them. Be as dull and stupid as it pleases God to let you be, and trouble neither yourself nor him about that, only ask Him to be with you all the same.”

Then the little man dropped on his knees by the bedside, and said :

“O Lord Jesus, be near when it seems to us, as it seemed to Thee once, that our Father has forsaken us and gathered back to Himself all the gifts He once gave us. Even Thou who wast mighty in death,

didst need the presence of Thy Father to make Thee able to endure : forget not us, the work of Thy hands yea, the labor of Thy heart and spirit. Oh remember that we are His offspring, neither accountable for our being, nor able to comfort or strengthen ourselves. If Thou wert to leave us alone, we should cry out upon Thee as on the mother who threw her babes to the wolves — and there are no wolves able to terrify Thee. Ah Lord ! we know Thou leavest us not, only in our weakness we would comfort our hearts with the music of the words of faith. Thou canst not do other than care for us, Lord Christ, for whether we be glad or sorry, slow of heart or full of faith, all the same are we the children of Thy Father. He sent us here, and never asked us if we would ; therefore Thou must be with us, and give us repentance and humility and love and faith, that we may indeed be the children of Thy Father who is in heaven. Amen."

CLXVII.

Lord hear my discontent : All blank I stand,
A mirror polished by Thy hand ;
Thy sun's beams flash and flame from me —
I cannot help it : here I stand, there he ;
To one of them I cannot say,
Go, and on yonder water play.
Nor one poor ragged daisy can I fashion —
I do not make the words of this my limping passion.

If I should say, Now I will think a thought,
Lo ! I must wait, unknowing,
What thought in me is growing,
Until the thing to birth is brought :
Nor know I then what next will come
From out the gulf of silence dumb.
I am the door the thing did find
To pass into the general mind ;
I cannot say I think —
I only stand upon the thought-well's brink ;
From darkness to the sun the water bubbles up —
I lift it in my cup.

Thou only thinkest — I am thought ;
Me and my thought Thou thinkest. Nought
Am I but as a fountain spout
From which Thy water welleteth out.
Thou art the only One, the All in all.
—Yet when my soul on Thee doth call
And Thou dost answer out of everywhere,
I in Thy allness have my perfect share.

CXCVIII.

“Can you then imagine any good reason,” said Drew,
“why we should be kept in such absolute ignorance
of everything that befalls the parted spirit from the
moment it quits its house with us?”

“I think I know one,” answered Polwarth.

“I have sometimes fancied it might be because no

true idea of their condition could possibly be grasped by those who remain in the tabernacle of the body; that to know their state it is necessary that we also should be clothed in our new bodies, which are to the old as a house to a tent. I doubt if we have any words in which the new facts could be imparted to our knowledge, the facts themselves being beyond the reach of any senses whereof we are now in actual possession. I expect to find my new body provided with new, I mean *other* senses beyond what I now possess: many more may be required to bring us into relation with all the facts in himself which God may have shadowed forth in properties, as we say, of what we call matter? The spaces all around us, even to those betwixt star and star may be the home of the multitudes of the heavenly host, yet seemingly empty to all who have but our provision of senses. But I do not care to dwell upon that kind of speculation. It belongs to a lower region, upon which I grudge to expend interest while the far loftier one invites me, where, if I gather not the special barley of which I am in search, I am sure to come upon the finest of wheat — well, then, for my reason: There are a thousand individual events in the course of every man's life, by which God takes a hold of him — a thousand breaches by which he could and does enter, little as the man may know it; but there is one universal and unchanging grasp He keeps upon the race, yet not as the race, for the grasp is upon every solitary

single individual that has a part in it: that grasp is — death in its mystery. To whom can the man who is about to die in absolute loneliness, and go he cannot tell whither, flee for refuge from the doubts and fears that assail him, but to the Father of his being? ”

“ But,” said Drew, “ I cannot see what harm would come of letting us know a little — as much at least as might serve to assure us that there was more of *something* on the other side.”

“ Just this,” returned Polwarth, “ that, their fears allayed, their hopes encouraged from any lower quarter, men would, as usual, turn away from the fountain to the cistern of life, from the ever fresh original creative Love to that drawn off and shut in. That there are thousands who would forget God if they could but be assured of such a tolerable state of things beyond the grave as even this wherein we now live, is plainly to be anticipated from the fact that the doubts of so many in respect of religion concentrate themselves nowadays upon the question whether there is any life beyond the grave ; a question which, although no doubt nearly associated with religion — as what question worth asking is not? — does not immediately belong to religion at all. Satisfy such people, if you can, that they shall live, and what have they gained? A little comfort perhaps — but a comfort not from the highest source, and possibly gained too soon for their well-being. Does it bring them any nearer to God than they

were before? Is He filling one cranny more of their hearts in consequence? Their assurance of immortality has not come from a knowledge of Him, and without Him it is worse than worthless. Little indeed has been gained, and that with the loss of much. The word applies here which our Lord in His parable puts in the mouth of Abraham: *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.* He does not say they would not believe in a future state though one rose from the dead—although most likely they would soon persuade themselves that the apparition after all was only an illusion—but that they would not be persuaded to repent, though one rose from the dead; and without that, what great matter whether they believe in a future state or not? It would only be the worse for them if they did. No, Mr. Drew! I repeat, it is not a belief in immortality that will deliver a man from the woes of humanity, but faith in the God of life, the Father of lights, the God of all consolation and comfort. Believing in Him, a man can leave his friends, and their and his own immortality, with everything else—even his and their love and perfection, with utter confidence in His hands. Until we have the life in us, we shall never be at peace. The living God dwelling in the heart He has made, and glorifying it by inmost speech with Himself—that is life, assurance and safety. Nothing less is or can be such."

CXCIX.

What headquarters, what court of place and circumstance should the Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, hold? And yet if from Him flow time and space, although He cannot be subject to them: if His Son could incarnate Himself—cast the living, responsive, elastic, flowing, evanishing circumstance of a human garment around him; if, as Novalis says, God can become whatever He can create, then may there not be some central home of God, holding relation even to time and space and sense? But I am bewildered about it.—Jesus stood in the meeting point of both worlds, or rather in the skirts of the great world that infolds the less. I am talking like a baby, for my words cannot compass or even represent my thoughts. This world looks to us the natural and simple one, and so it is—absolutely fitted to our need and education. But there is that in us which is not at home in this world, which I believe holds secret relations with every star, or perhaps rather with that in the heart of God whence issued every star, diverse in kind and character as in color and place and motion and light. To that in us this world is so far strange and unnatural and unfitting, and we need a yet homelier home. Yea, no home at last will do but the home of God's heart. Jesus, I say, was looking, on one side into the region of a deeper life where His people, those that knew

their own when they saw Him, would one day find themselves tenfold at home ; while, on the other hand, He was looking into the region of their present life, which custom and faithlessness makes them afraid to leave. But we need not fear what the new conditions of life will bring, either for body or heart ; they will be nearer and sweeter to our deeper being as Jesus is nearer and dearer than any man, because He is more human than any. He is all that we can love or look for, and at the root of that very loving and looking—“In my father’s house are many mansions,” He said. Matter, time, space, are all God’s, and whatever may become of our philosophies, whatever He does with, or in respect of time, place, and what we call matter, His doing must be true in philosophy as well as fact.

CC.

“I wonder what I shall do the first thing when I find myself out of the body.”

“It does seem strange we should know so little of what is in some sense so near us that such a thin veil should be so impenetrable ! I fancy the first thing I should do would be to pray.”

“Then you think we shall pray there—wherever it is?”

“It seems to me as if I should go up in prayer the moment I got out of this dungeon of a body. I am

wrong to call it a dungeon, for it lies open to God's fair world. Still it is a pleasant thought that it will drop off me some day. But for prayer—I think all will pray there more than here—in their hearts and souls, I mean."

"Then where would be the harm if you were to pray for me after I am gone?"

"Nowhere that I know. It were indeed a strange thing if I might pray for you up to the moment when you ceased to breathe, and therewith an iron gate closed between us, and I could not even reach you through the ear of the Father of us both! It is a faithless doctrine, for it supposes either that those parted from us can do without prayer, the thing Jesus Himself could not do without, seeing it was His highest joy, or that God has so parted those who are in Him from these who are not in Him, that there is no longer any relation, even with God, common to them. The thing to me takes the form of an absurdity."

CCI.

Wherein consists the essential inherent worthiness of a life as life? The only perfect idea of life is—a unit, self-existent and creative. That is God, the only one. But to this idea, in its kind, must every life, to be complete as life, correspond; and the human correspondence to self-existence is that the man should

round and complete himself by taking into himself his origin, by going back and in his own will adopting that origin, rooting therein afresh in the exercise of his own freedom and in all the energy of his own self-roused will; in other words, that the man say, 'I will be after the will of the creating I;' that he see and say with his whole being that to will the will of God in himself and for himself and concerning himself is the highest possible condition of a man. Then has he completed his cycle by turning back upon his history, laying hold of his cause, and willing his own being in the will of the only I AM. This is the rounding, recreating, unifying of the man. This is religion: and all that gathers not with this scatters abroad.

CCII.

So long as a creature has not sinned, sin is possible to him. Does it seem inconsistent with the character of God that in order that sin should become impossible, He should allow sin to come? that, in order that His creatures should choose the good and refuse the evil, in order that they might become such with their whole nature infinitely enlarged, as to turn from sin with a perfect repugnance of the will, He should allow them to fall, that in order that, from being sweet, childish children, they should become noble, child-like men and women, He should let them try to walk alone?

Why should He not allow the possible in order that it should become impossible? for possible it would ever have been, even in the midst of all the blessedness until it had been, and had been thus destroyed. Thus sin is slain, uprooted. And the war must ever exist, it seems to me, where there is creation still going on.

CCIII.

A man may be oppressed by his sins, and hardly know what it is that oppresses him. There is more of sin in our burdens than we are ourselves aware. It needs not that we should have committed any grievous fault. Do we recognize in ourselves that which needs to be set right, that of which we ought to be ashamed, something which, were we lifted above all worldly anxieties, would yet keep us uneasy, dissatisfied, take the essential gladness out of the sunlight, make the fair face of the earth indifferent to us, a trustful glance, a discomposing look, and death a darkness? I say, to the man who feels thus, whatever he may have done or left undone, he is not so far from the kingdom of heaven but that he may enter therein if he will.

CCIV.

There was a time when I could not understand that he who loved not his brother was a murderer: now I

see it to be no figure of speech, but, in the realities of man's moral and spiritual nature, an absolute simple fact. The murderer and the unloving sit on the same bench before the judge of eternal truth. The man who loves not his brother I do not say is at this moment capable of killing him, but if the natural working of his unlove be not checked, he will assuredly become capable of killing him. Until we love our brother—yes, until we love our enemy, who is yet our brother—we contain within ourselves the undeveloped germ of murder. And so with every sin in the tables or out of the tables. We are very ready to draw in our minds a distinction between respectable sins—human imperfections we call them, perhaps—and disreputable vices, such as theft and murder; but there is no such distinction in fact. The heavenly order goes upon other principles than ours, and there are first that shall be last, and last that shall be first. Only, at the root of all human bliss lies repentance.

CCV.

The marvelous man who appeared in Palestine, teaching and preaching, seems to have suffered far more from sympathy with the inward sorrows of His race than from pity for their bodily pains. These last could He not have swept from the earth with a word? and yet it seems to have been mostly, if not indeed

always, only in answer to prayer that he healed them, and that for the sake of some deeper, some spiritual healing that should go with the bodily cure. It could not be for the dead man whom He was about to call from the tomb that His tears flowed. What source could they have but compassion and pitiful sympathy for the sorrows of the dead man's sisters and friends who had not the inward joy that sustained Himself, and the thought of all the pains and heart-aches of those that looked in the face of death—the moanings of love-torn generations, the blackness of bereavement, that had stormed through the ever-changing world of human hearts since first man had been made in the image of His Father? Yet are there far more terrible troubles than this death—which I trust can only part, not keep apart. There is the weight of conscious wrong-being and wrong-doing that is the gravestone that needs to be rolled away ere a man can rise to life. Call to mind how Jesus used to forgive men's sins, thus lifting from their hearts the crushing load that paralyzed all their efforts. Recall the tenderness with which He received those from whom the religious of His day turned aside—the repentant woman who wept sore-hearted from very love, the publicans who knew they were despised because they were despicable. With Him they sought and found shelter. He was their savior from the storm of human judgment and the biting frost of public opinion, even when that

opinion and that judgment were re-echoed by the justice of their hearts. He received them, and the life within them rose up, and the light shone—the conscious light of life—despite even of shame and self-reproach. If God be for us who can be against us?

CCVI.

They come to Thee, the halt, the maimed, the blind,
The devil-torn, the sick, the sore;
Thy heart their well of life they find,
Thine ear their open door.

Ah! who can tell the joy in Palestine —
What smiles and tears of rescued throngs!
Their leaves of life were turned to wine,
Their prayers to shouts and songs!

The story dear our wise men fable call.
Give paltry facts the mighty range;
To me it seems just what should fall,
And nothing very strange.

But were I deaf and lame and blind and sore,
I scarce would care for cure to ask;
Another prayer should haunt Thy door —
Set Thee a harder task.

If Thou art Christ, see here this heart of mine,
Torn, empty, moaning and unblest!
Had ever heart more need of Thine,
If Thine indeed hath rest?

Thy word, Thy hand, right soon did scare the bane
That in their bodies death did breed;
If Thou canst cure my deeper pain,
Then art Thou Lord indeed.

CCVII.

A doubter is not without faith. The very fact that he doubts shows that he has some faith. When I find any one hard upon doubters, I always doubt the *quality* of his faith. It is of little use to have a great cable, if the hemp is so poor that it breaks like the painter of a boat. I have known people whose power of believing chiefly consisted in their incapacity for seeing difficulties. Of what fine sort of faith must be that which is founded in stupidity, or far worse, indifference to the truth, and the mere desire to get out of hell! That is not a grand belief in the Son of God, the radiation of the Father. We get a glimpse of Thomas's want of faith in the grumbling, self-pitying way in which he said, "Let us also go that we may die with Him." His Master had said that He was going to wake Lazarus. Thomas said, "that we may die with Him." You may say, "he did not understand Him." True, it may be, but his unbelief was the cause of his not understanding Him. I suppose Thomas meant this as a reproach to Jesus for putting them all in danger by going back to Judæa; if not it

was only a poor piece of sentimentality. So much for Thomas's unbelief. But he had good and true faith notwithstanding ; for *he went with his Master*.

CCVIII.

A great part of the doubt in the world comes from the fact that there are in it so many more of the impossible, as compared with the originating minds. Where the openness to impression is balanced by the power of production, the painful questions of the world are speedily met by their answers ; where such is not the case, there are often long periods of suffering. Hence the need for every impressible mind to be by reading or speech, held in living association with an original mind, able to combat those suggestions of doubt and even unbelief, which the look of things must often occasion — a look which comes from our inability to gain other than fragmentary visions of the work that the Father worketh hitherto.

CCIX.

O Lord ! if on the wind at cool of day,
I heard one whispered word of mighty grace ;
If through the darkness, as in bed I lay,
But once had come a hand upon my face ;

If but one sign that might not be mistook,
Had ever been, since first Thy face I sought,
I should not now be doubting o'er a book,
But serving Thee with burning heart and thought.

So dreams that heart. But to my heart I say,
Turning my face to front the dark and wind;
Such signs had only barred anew His way
Into thee, longing heart, thee, wildered mind.

They asked the very Way, where lies the way;
The very Son, where is the Father's face;
How He could show Himself, if not in clay,
Who was the Lord of Spirit, form and space?

My being, Lord, will nevermore be whole
Until Thou come behind mine ears and eyes,
Enter and fill the temple of my soul
With perfect contact — such a sweet surprise —

Such presence as, before it met the view,
The prophet fancy could not once foresee,
Though every corner of the temple knew
By very emptiness its need of Thee.

When I keep *all* Thy words, no favored some —
Heedless of worldly winds or judgment's tide,
Then, Jesus, Thou wilt with Thy Father come —
O ended prayers! — and in my soul abide.

Ah! long delay! ah! cunning, creeping sin;
I shall but fail and cease at length to try;
O Jesus! though Thou wilt not yet come in,
Knock at my window as Thou passest by.

CCX.

What if, after all the discoveries made, and all the theories set up and pulled down, amid all the common-places men call common sense, notwithstanding all the overpowering and excluding self-assertion of things that are seen, ever crying, "Here we are, and save us: there is nothing: the Unseen is the Unreal!"—what if, I say, notwithstanding all this, it should yet be that the strongest weapon a man can wield, is prayer to one who made him! What if the man who lifts up his heart to the unknown God even, be entering, amid the mockery of men who worship what they call natural law and science, into the region whence issues every law, and where the very material of science is born!

"From that moment," said Polwarth, "I was a student, a disciple. Soon to me also came the two questions: *How do I know that there is a God at all?* and *How am I to know that such a man as Jesus ever lived?* I could answer neither. But in the meantime I was reading the story—was drawn to the man there presented, and was trying to understand His being, and character, and principles of life and action. And, to sum all in a word, many months had not passed ere I had forgotten to seek an answer to either question: they were in fact questions no longer: I had seen the man Jesus Christ, and in Him had known the Father of Him

and of me. No conviction can be got, or if it could be got, would be of any sufficing value, through that dealer in second-hand goods, the intellect. If by it we could prove there is a God, it would be of small avail indeed: we must see Him and know Him, to know that He was not a demon. But I know no other way of knowing that there is a God but that which reveals *what* He is — the only idea that could be God — shows Him in his own self-proving existence — and that way is Jesus Christ as He revealed himself on earth, and as He is revealed afresh to every heart that seeks to know the truth concerning Him.

“Either the whole frame of existence, is a wretched, miserable unfitness, a chaos with dreams of a world, a chaos in which the higher is forever subject to the lower, or it is an embodied idea growing towards perfection in Him who is the one perfect creative Idea, the Father of lights, who suffers Himself that He may bring His many sons into the glory which is His own glory.”

CCXI.

Yes, master, when Thou comest Thou shalt find

A little faith on earth, if I am here !

Thou know'st how oft I turn to Thee my mind

How sad I wait until Thy face appear !

Hast Thou not plowed my thorny ground full sore

And from it gathered many stones and shreds,

Plow, plow and harrow till it needs no more —
Then sow Thy mustard-seed, and send Thy birds.

I love Thee, Lord! and if I yield to fears,
Nor trust with triumph that pale doubt defies,
Remember, Lord, 'tis nigh two thousand years,
And I have never seen Thee with mine eyes.

And when I lift them from the wondrous tale,
See all about me hath so strange a show!
Is that Thy river running down the vale?
Is that Thy wind that through the pines doth blow!

Could'st Thou right verily appear again,
The same who walked the paths of Palestine,
And here in England teach Thy trusting men,
In church and field and house with sword and sign.

Here are but lilies, sparrows, and the rest
My hands on some dear proof would light and stay!
But my heart sees John leaning on Thy breast,
And sends them forth to do what Thou dost say.

CCXII.

“Is the child,” said Polwarth “who sits by his father’s knee and looks up into his father’s face, *serving* that father because the heart of the father delights to look down upon his child? And shall the moment of my deepest repose and bliss, the moment when I serve myself with the very life of the universe,

be called a serving of my God? It is communion with God; He holds it with me else never could I hold it with Him. I am as the foam-froth upon His infinite ocean, but of the water of the ocean is the bubble on its waves.

“When my child would serve me,” he went on, “he spies out some need I have, springs from his seat at my knee, finds that which will meet my necessity, and is my eager, happy servant, of consequence in his own eyes inasmuch as he has done something for his father. His seat by my knee is love, delight, well-being, peace—not service, however pleasing in my eyes. ‘Why do you seat yourself at my knee, my son?’ ‘To please you, father.’ ‘Nay, then my son! go from me, and come again when it shall be to please thyself.’ ‘Why do you cling to my chair, my daughter?’ ‘Because I want to be near you, father. It makes me so happy!’ ‘Come nearer still—come to my bosom, my child, and be yet happier.’ Talk not of public worship as divine service; it is a mockery. Search the prophets, and you will find the observances, fasts and sacrifices and solemn feasts of the temple, by them regarded with loathing and scorn just because by the people they were regarded as *divine service*.”

“But,” said Mr. Drew, while Wingfold turned towards him with some anxiety lest he should break the mood of the little prophet, “I can’t help thinking I

have you ; for how are poor creatures like us — weak, blundering creatures, sometimes most awkward when best intentioned — how are we to minister to a perfect God — perfect in wisdom, strength, and everything — of whom Paul says that He is not worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything? I cannot help thinking that you are fighting merely with a word. Certainly, if the phrase ever was used in that sense, there is no meaning of the kind attached to it now : it stands merely for the forms of public worship."

"Were there no such thing as divine service in the true sense of the word, then indeed it would scarcely be worth while to quarrel with its misapplication. But I assert that true and genuine service may be rendered to the living God ; and for the development of the divine nature in man, it is necessary that he should do something for God. Nor is it hard to discover how ; for God is in every creature that He has made, and in their needs He is needy, and in all their afflictions He is afflicted. Therefore Jesus says that whatever is done to one of His little ones is done to Him. And if the soul of a man be the temple of the Spirit, then is the place of that man's labor — his shop, his counting-house, his laboratory — the temple of Jesus Christ, where the spirit of the man is incarnate in work."

CCXIII.

Methought that in a solemn church I stood.
Its marble acres, worn with knees and feet,
Lay spread from door to door, from street to street
Midway the form hung high upon the road
Of Him who gave His life to be our good :
Beyond, priests flitted, bowed and murmured meet
Among the candles shining still and sweet.
Men came and went, and worshipped as they could,
And still their dust a woman with her broom,
Bowed to her work, kept sweeping to the door,
Then saw I, slow through all the pillared gloom,
Across the church a silent figure come :
“ Daughter,” it said, “ thou’ sweepest well my floor ! ”
It is the Lord, I cried, and saw no more.

CLXXIV.

The world is full of beautiful things, but God has saved many men, from loving the mere bodies of them, by making them poor ; and more still by reminding them that if they be as rich as Cræsus all their lives, they will be as poor as Diogenes — poorer, without even a tub — when this world with all its pictures, scenery and books shall have vanished away.

If the flowers were not perishable, we should cease to contemplate their beauty, either blinded by the passion for hoarding the bodies of them, or dulled by the hebetude of commonplaceness that the constant pres-

ence of them would occasion. To compare great things with small, the flowers wither, the bubbles break, the clouds and sunsets pass, for the very same holy reason, in the degree of its application to them, for which the Lord withdrew from His disciples and ascended again to His Father — that the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, the Soul of things might come to them and abide with them, and so, the Son return, and the Father be revealed. The flower is not its loveliness, and its loveliness we must love, else we shall only treat them as flower-greedy children, who gather and gather, and fill hands and baskets from a mere desire of acquisition, excusable enough in them, but the same in kind, however harmless in mode, and degree, and object, as the avarice of the miser. Therefore God, that we may always have them, and ever learn to love their beauty, and yet more their truth, sends the beneficent winter that we may think about what we have lost, and welcome when they come again, with greater tenderness and love, with clearer eyes to see, and purer hearts to understand, the Spirit that dwells in them.

CCXV.

“Well, sir.” said the old sexton’s wife, “she be a bee-utiful old church. Some things, I think, sir, grows more beautiful the older they grows! But it ain’t us, sir.”

"I'm not so sure of that," I said. "What do you mean?"

"Well, sir, there's my little grandson in the cottage there; he'll never be so beautiful again. Them children du be the loves. But we all grows uglier as we grows older. Churches don't seem too, sir."

"I'm not so sure about all that," I said again.

"They did say, sir, that I was a pretty girl once. I'm not much to look at now."

And she smiled with such a gracious amusement that I felt at once that if there was any vanity left in memory of her past loveliness, it was as sweet as the memory of their old fragrance left in the withered leaves of the roses.

"But it du not matter, du it, sir? Beauty is only skin-deep."

"I don't believe that," I answered. "Beauty is as deep as the heart, at least."

"Well, to be sure, my old husband du say I be as handsome in his eyes as ever I be. But I beg your pardon sir, for talkin about myself. I believe it was the old church—she set us on to it."

"The old church didn't lead you into any harm, then," I answered. "The beauty that is in the heart will shine out of the face again some day—be sure of that. And after all, there is just the same kind of beauty in a good old face that there is in an old

church. You can't say the church is so trim and neat as it was the day that the first blast of the organ filled it as with a living soul. The carving is not quite so sharp, the timbers are not quite so clean. There is a good deal of mould and worm-eating and cobwebs about the old place. Yet both you and I think it more beautiful now than it was then. Well, I believe it is, as nearly as possible, the same with an old face. It has got stained and weather-beaten and worn; but if the organ of truth has been playing on inside the temple of the Lord, which St. Paul says our bodies are, there is in the old face, though both form and complexion are gone, just the beauty of the music inside. The wrinkles and the brownness can't spoil it. A light shines through it all—that of the indwelling spirit. I wish we all grew old like the old churches."

CCXVI

In some regions beauty must be looked for below the surface. There is a probability of finding hollows of repose, sunken spots of loveliness, hidden away altogether from the general aspect of sternness or perhaps sterility, that meets the eye in glancing over the outspread landscape; just as in the natures of stern men, you may expect to find, if opportunity should be afforded you, sunny spots of tender verdure,

kept ever green by that very sternness, which is turned towards the common gaze —thus existent because they are below the surface, and not laid bare to the sweep of the cold winds that roam over the world. How often have not men started with amaze at the discovery of some feminine sweetness, some grace of protection in the man whom they had indeed thought cold and hard and rugged, inaccessible to the more genial influences of humanity! It may be that such men are only fighting against the wind, and keep their hearts open to the sun.

CCXVII.

Show a beautiful picture, one full of quiet imagination and deep thought, to a common-minded man; he will pass it by with some slight remark, thinking it very ordinary and commonplace. That is because he is commonplace. Because our minds are so commonplace, have so little of the divine imagination in them, therefore we do not recognize the spiritual meaning and worth, we do not perceive the beautiful will of God, in the things required of us, though they are full of it. But if we *do* them we shall thus make acquaintance with them, and come to see what is in them. The roughest kernel amongst them has a tree of life in its heart.

CCXVIII.

"Not much of weather for your sacred craft, Percivale," I said to the artist, as he entered. "I suppose if you were asked to make a sketch to-day it would be much the same as if a stupid woman were to ask you to take her portrait."

"Not quite so bad as that," said Percivale. "Surely the human face is more than nature."

"Nature is never stupid."

"The woman might be pretty."

"Nature is full of beauty in her worst moods ; while the prettier such a woman, the more stupid she would look, and the more irksome you would feel the task, for you could not help making claims upon her which you would never think of making upon nature."

"I dare say you are right. Such stupidity has a good deal to do with moral causes. You do not ever feel that nature is to blame."

"Nature is never ugly. She may be dull, sorrowful, troubled : she may be lost in tears and pallor, but she cannot be ugly. It is only when you rise into animal nature that you find ugliness."

"True in the main only ; for no lines of absolute division can be drawn in nature ; I have seen ugly flowers."

"I grant it. But they are exceptional. And none of them are without beauty."

“Surely not. The ugliest soul is not without some beauty. But I grant you that the higher you rise, the more is ugliness possible, just because the greater beauty is possible. There is no ugliness to equal in repulsiveness the ugliness of a beautiful face.”

CCXIX.

We are so easily affected by the smallest things that are of the unpleasant kind, that we ought to train ourselves to the influence of those that are of an opposite nature. The unpleasant ones are like the thorns which make themselves felt as we scramble—for we often do scramble in a very undignified manner through the thickets of life; and feeling the thorns, we grumble, and are blind to all but the thorns. The flowers and the lovely leaves, and the red berries, and the clusters of filberts, and the birds’ nests, do not force themselves upon our attention as the thorns do, and the thorns make us forget to look for them. But a scratch would be forgotten—and that in mental hurts is often equivalent to a cure, for a forgotten scratch on the mind or heart will never fester—if we but allowed our being a moment’s repose upon any of the quiet, waiting unobtrusive beauties that lie around the half-trodden way, offering their gentle healing. And when I think how, not unfrequently, other-

wise noble characters are anything but admirable when under the influence of trifling irritations, the very paltriness of which seems what the mind, which would at once rouse itself to a noble endurance of any mighty evil, is unable to endure, I would gladly help so with sweet antidotes to defeat the fly in the ointment of the apothecary that the whole pot shall send forth a pure savor. We ought for this to cultivate the friendship of little things. Beauty is one of the surest antidotes to vexation. Often when life looked dreary about me, from some real or fancied injustice or indignity, has a thought of truth been flashed into my mind from a flower, a shape of frost, or even a lingering shadow—not to mention such glories as angel-winged clouds, rainbows, stars and sunrises.

CCXX.

The tide had filled thousands of hollows in the breakwater, hundreds of cracked basins in the rocks, huge sponges of sand; from all of which—from cranny and crack and oozing sponge—the water flowed in restricted haste back, back to the sea, tumbling in tiny cataracts down the faces of the rocks, bubbling from their roots as from wells, gathering in tanks of sand, and overflowing in broad shallow streams, curving and sweeping in their sandy channels

just like the great rivers of a continent ; — here spreading into smooth, silent lakes and reaches, here babbling along in ripples and waves innumerable — flowing, flowing, to lose their small beings in the same ocean that met on the other side the waters of the Mississippi, the Orinoco, the Amazon. All their channels were of golden sand, and the golden sunlight was above and through and in them all : gold and gold met, with the waters between. And what gave an added life to their motion was that all the ripples made shadows on the clear yellow below them. The eye could not see the rippling on the surface ; but the sun saw it, and drew it in multitudinous shadowy motion upon the sand, with the play of a thousand fancies of gold burnished and dead, of sunlight and yellow, trembling, melting, curving, blending, vanishing ever, ever renewed. It was as if all the water-marks upon a web of golden silk had been set in wildest, yet most graceful curvilinear motion by the breath of a hundred playful zephyrs. My eye could not be filled with seeing. I stood in speechless delight for awhile gazing at the “endless ending,” which was the ‘humor of the game,’ and thinking how in all God’s works the laws of beauty are wrought out in evanishment, in birth and death. There, there is no hoarding, but an ever-fresh creating, an eternal flow of life from the heart of the All-beautiful.

CCXXI.

Whereas in former times the name Christ had been to the curate little more than a dull theological symbol, the thought of Him and of His thoughts were now constantly with him; ever and anon some fresh light would break from the cloudy halo that enwrapped His grandeur; ever was he growing more the Son of Man to his loving heart, ever more the Son of God to his aspiring spirit. Testimony had merged almost in vision; he saw into, and partly understood, the perfection it presented: he looked upon the face of God and lived. Oftener and oftener, as the days passed, did it seem as if the man were by his side, and at times, in the stillness of the summer eve, when he walked alone, it seemed almost as thoughts of revealing arose in his heart, that the Master himself was teaching him in spoken words. What need now to rack his soul in following the dim-seen, ever-vanishing paths of metaphysics? He had but to obey the prophet of life, the man whose being and doing and teaching were blended in one three-fold harmony—or, rather, were the three-fold analysis of one white essence—he had but to obey Him, haunt His footsteps, and hearken after the sound of His spirit, and all truth would in healthy process be unfolded in Himself. What philosophy could carry him where Jesus could carry His obedient friends—into

His own peace, namely, far above all fear and all hate, where his soul should breathe such a high atmosphere of strength at once, and repose, that he should love even his enemies, and that with no such love as condescendingly overlooks, but with the real, hearty, and self-involved affection that would die to give them the true life ! Alas ! how far was he from such perfection now—from such a martyrdom, lovely as endless, in the consuming fire of God ! And at the thought he fell from the heights of his contemplation—but was caught in the thicket of prayer.

CCXXII.

More even than a knowledge of the truth, is a readiness to receive it ; and Janet saw from the first that Gibbie's ignorance at its worst was but room vacant for the truth : when it came, it found bolt nor bar on door or window, but had immediate entrance. The secret of this power of reception was, that to see a truth and to do it was one and the same thing with Gibbie. To know and not do would have seemed to him an impossibility, as it is in vital idea a monstrosity.

CCXXIII.

Being in the light Janet understood the light, and

had no need of system, either true or false, to explain it to her. She lived by the word proceeding out of the mouth of God. When life begins to speculate upon itself, I suspect it has begun to die.

CCXXIV.

It is infinitely better to think wrong and to act right upon that wrong thinking, than it is to think right and not to do as that thinking requires of us. In the former case the man's house, if not built upon the rock, at least has the rock beneath it; in the latter, it is founded on nothing but sand. The former man may be a Saul of Tarsus; the latter a Judas Iscariot. He who acts right, will soon think right; he who acts wrong will soon think wrong. Any two persons acting faithfully upon opposite convictions, are divided but by a bowing wall; any two, in belief most harmonious, who do not act upon it, are divided by infinite gulfs of the blackness of darkness, across which neither ever beholds the real self of the other.

CCXXV.

We are bound to obey the truth, and that to the full extent of our knowledge thereof, however *little* that may be. This obligation acknowledged and *obeyed*

the road is open to all truth — and the *only* road. The way to know is to do the known.

CCXXVI.

He who gladly kneels with one who thinks largely wide from himself, in so doing draws nearer to the Father of both than he who pours forth his soul in sympathetic torrent only in the company of those who think like himself. If a man be of the truth, then and only then, is he of those who gather with the Lord.

CCXXVII.

Human words at least, however it may be with some high heavenly language, can never say the best things but by a kind of stumbling, wherein one contradiction keepeth another from falling. No man can rid him of himself and live, for that involveth an impossibility. But he can rid himself of that haunting shadow of his own self, which he hath pampered and fed upon shadowy lies, until it is bloated and black with pride and folly. When that demon-king of shades is once cast out, and the man's house is possessed of God instead, then first he findeth his true, substantial self, which is the servant, nay, the child of God. To rid thee of thyself, thou must offer it again to Him that made it. Be thou empty that He may fill thee.

CCXXVIII.

While one's good opinion of himself remains untroubled, confesses no touch, gives out no hollow sound, shrinks not self-hurt with the doubt of its own reality, hostile criticism will not go very deep, will not reach to the quick. The thing that hurts is that which sets trembling the ground of self-worship, lays bare the shrunk cracks and worm-holes under the golden plates of the idol, shows the ants running about in it, and renders the foolish smile of the thing hateful. But he who will then turn away from his imagined self and refer his life to the hidden ideal self, the angel that ever beholds the face of the Father, shall therein be made whole and sound, alive and free.

CCXXIX.

All a man can do in the matter of judgment is to lead his fellow-man, if so he can, up to the judgment of God. He must never dare judge him for himself. If thou canst not tell whether thou didst well or ill in what thou didst, thou shouldst not vex thy soul. God is thy refuge—even from the wrongs of thine own judgment. Pray to Him to let thee know the truth, that if needful thou mayst repent. Be patient and not sorrowful until He show thee. Nor fear that He will judge thee harshly, because He must judge

thee truly. That were to wrong God. Trust in Him, even when thou fearest wrong in thyself, for He will deliver thee therefrom.

CCXXX.

How difficult it is to make prevalent the right notion of anything! But only a little reflection is required to explain the fact. The cause is, that so few people give themselves the trouble to understand what is told them. The first thing suggested by the words spoken is taken instead of the fact itself, and to that as a ground-plan, all that follows is fitted. People listen so badly, even when not sleepily, that the wonder is anything of consequence should ever be even approximately understood. How appalling it would be to one anxious to convey a meaning, to see the shapes of his words assumed in the mind of his listening friend! For, in place of falling upon the table of his perception, kept steady by will and judgment, he would see them tumble upon the sounding board of his imagination, ever vibrating, and there be danced, like sand, into all manner of shapes, according to the tune played by the capricious instrument.

CCXXXI.

Depth to some is indicated by gloom, and affection by a persistent brooding — as if there were not hom-

age to the past of love save sighs and tears. When they meet a man whose eyes shine, whose step is light, on whose lips hovers a smile, they shake their heads and say, "There goes one who has never loved, and who therefore knows not sorrow." But such a man is one of those over whom death has no power ; whom time nor space can part from those he loves ; who lives in the future more than in the past ! Has not his being ever been for the sake of that which was yet to come ? Is not his being now for the sake of that which it shall be ? Has he not infinitely more to do with the great future than the little past ? The Past has descended into hell, is even now ascending glorified, and will, in returning cycle, ever and again greet our faith as the more and yet more radiant Future.

CCXXXII.

We are saved by hope. Never man hoped too much, or repented that he had hoped. The plague is, that we don't hope in God half enough. The very fact that hope is strength, and strength the outcome, the body of life, shows that hope is at one with life, with the very essence of what says "I am" — yea, of what doubts and says "Am I ?" — and therefore is reasonable to creatures who can not even doubt save in that they live.

CCXXXIII.

There is a strange delight in motion, which I am not sure that I altogether understand. The hope of the end as bringing fresh enjoyment has something to do with it, no doubt; the accompaniments of the motion, the change of scene, the mystery that lies beyond the next hill, or the next turn in the road, the breath of the summer wind, the scent of the pine trees, especially, and of all the earth, the tinkling jangle of the harness as you pass the trees on the roadside, the life of the horses, the glitter and shadow, the cottages and the roses and the rosy faces, the scent of burning wood or peat from the chimneys—these and a thousand other things combine to make such a journey delightful. But I believe it needs something more than this—something even closer to the human life—to account for the pleasure that motion gives us. I suspect it is its living symbolism; the hidden relations which it bears to the eternal soul in its aspirations and longings—ever following after, ever attaining, never satisfied. Do not misunderstand me. A man, you will allow, perhaps, may be content although he is not and cannot be happy: I feel inclined to turn all this the other way, saying that a man ought always to be happy, never to be content. You will see I do not say contented; I say content. Here comes in his faith: his life is hid with trust in God, measureless,

unbounded. All things are his, to become his by blessed, lovely gradations of gift as his being enlarges to receive ; and if ever the shadow of his own necessary incompleteness falls upon the man, he has only to remember that in God's idea he is complete, only his life is hid from himself with Christ in God the Infinite.

CCXXXIV.

The most presumptuous thing in the world is to pronounce on the possible and the impossible. I do not know what is possible and what is impossible. I can only tell a little of what is true and what is untrue. I get peeps now and then into the condition of my own heart, which, for the moment, make it seem impossible that I should ever rise into a true state of nature — that is, into the simplicity of God's will concerning me. The only hope for ourselves and others lies in Him—in the power the creating Spirit has over the spirits He has made.

CCXXXV.

I fancy I hear a whisper
As of leaves in a gentle air :
Is it wrong, I wonder to fancy
It may be the Tree up there ?

The Tree that healeth the nations,
Growing amidst the street,
And dropping for who will gather,
Its apples at their feet?

I fancy I hear a rushing
As of waters down a slope,
Is it wrong, I wonder, to fancy
It may be the river of hope?
The river of crystal waters
That flows from the very throne,
And runs through the street of the city
With a softly jubilant tone?

I fancy a twilight round me,
And a wandering of the breeze,
With a hush in that high city,
And a shadow among the trees.
But I know there will be no night there —
No coming and going day;
For the holy face of the Father
Will be perfect light away.

I should seek, I should care, for nothing,
Beholding His countenance;
And fear but to lose one glimmer
By one single sideway glance,
Come to me, shine on me, Master,
And I care not for river or tree —
Care for no sorrow or crying
If only Thou shine in me.

CCXXXVI.

Whatever belongs to God is essential to God. He is one pure, clean essence of being, to use our poor words to describe the indescribable. Nothing hangs about Him that does not belong to Him — that He could part with and be nothing the worse. Still less is there anything He could part with and be the worse. Whatever belongs to Him is of His own kind, is part of Himself, so to speak. Therefore there is nothing indifferent to His character to be found in Him ; and therefore when our Lord says not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father, that, being a fact with regard to God, must be an essential fact — one, namely, without which He could be no God.

CCXXXVII.

It was a cold evening in the middle of November. The light which had been scanty enough all day, had vanished in a thin penetrating London fog. Round every lamp in the street was a colored halo ; the gay shops gleamed like jewel-caverns of Aladdin hollowed out of the darkness ; and the people that hurried or sauntered along looked inscrutable. Where could they live ? Had they anybody to love them ? Were their hearts quiet under their dingy cloaks and shabby coats ?

What would not one give for a peep into the mysteries of all these worlds that go crowding past us! If we could but see through the opaque husk of them, some would glitter and glow like diamond mines; others, perhaps, would look mere earthy holes; some of them forsaken quarries, with a great pool of stagnant water in the bottom; some like vast coal-pits of gloom, into which you dared not carry a lighted lamp for fear of explosion. Some would be mere lumber-rooms; others, ill-arranged libraries, without a poet's corner anywhere. But what a wealth of creation they show, and what infinite room for hope it affords!

Be sure of this, that as the Father is keen-eyed, for the evil in His creatures to destroy it, He would if it were possible, be yet keener-eyed for the good to nourish and cherish it.

CCXXXVIII.

I am certain you cannot do people good by showing them *only* the painful. Make your pictures as painful as you will but put some hope into them, something to show that action is worth taking in the affair. From mere suffering people will turn away, and you cannot blame them. Every show of it, without hinting at some door of escape, only urges them to forget it all. Why should they be pained if it can do no good?

CCXXXIX.

Oh, the love of the Son of Man, who in the midst of all the wretched weaknesses of those who surrounded Him, loved the best in them, and looked forward to His own victory for them, that they might become all that they were meant to be—like Him; that the lovely glimmerings of truth and love that were in them now—the breakings forth of the light that lighteneth every man—might grow into the perfect human day; loving them even the more that they were so helpless, so oppressed, so far from that ideal which was their life, and which all their dim desires were reaching after.

CCXL.

O Lord, how happy is the time
When in Thy love I rest!
When from my weariness I climb
Even to Thy tender breast!
The night of sorrow endeth there:
Thou art brighter than the sun;
And in Thy pardon and Thy care
The heaven of heaven is won.

Let the world call herself my foe,
Or let the world allure,
I care not for the world: I go
To this dear Friend and sure.

And when life's fiercest storms are sent
Upon life's wildest sea,
My little bark is confident
Because it holds by Thee.

When the law threatens endless death
Upon the awful hill,
Straightway from her consuming breath,
My soul goes higher still —
Goeth to Jesus, wounded, slain,
And maketh Him her home,
Whence she will not go out again,
And where death cannot come.

I do not fear the wilderness
Where Thou hast been before;
Nay, rather will I daily press
After Thee, near Thee, more.
Thou art my food; on Thee I lean;
Thou makest my heart sing;
And to Thy heavenly pastures green
All Thy dear flock dost bring.

And if the gate that opens there
Be dark to other men,
It is not dark to those who share
The heart of Jesus then.
That is not losing much of life
Which is not losing Thee
Who art as present in the strife
As in the victory.

Therefore how happy is the time
When in Thy love I rest!

When from my weariness I climb
Even to Thy tender breast !
The night of sorrow endeth there :
Thou art brighter than the sun ;
And in Thy pardon and Thy care
The heaven of heaven is won.

CCXLI.

Hope never hurt any one— never yet interfered with duty ; nay, it always strengthens to the performance of duty, gives courage and clears the judgment. St. Paul says we are saved by hope. Hope is the most rational thing in the universe. Even the ancient poets, who believed it was delusive, yet regarded it as an antidote given by the mercy of the gods against some at least of the ills of life.

CCXLII.

I have never known a *satisfied* Christian. Indeed, I should take satisfaction as a poor voucher of Christianity. But I have known several contented Christians. I might in respect of one or two of them, use a stronger word—certainly, not *satisfied*. I believe there is a grand essential—unsatisfaction—I do not mean dissatisfaction—which adds the delight of expectation to the peace of attainment ; and that, I presume, is the very consciousness of heaven. But where

faith may not have produced even contentment, it will yet sustain hope. We must believe in a living ideal, before we can have a tireless heart ; an ideal which draws our poor vague ideal to itself, to fill it full and make it alive.

CCXLIII.

All about us in earth and air, wherever eye or ear can reach there is a power ever breathing itself forth in signs, now in a daisy, now in a windwaft, a cloud, a sunset ; a power that holds constant and sweetest relation with the dark and silent world within us ; that the same of God who is in us, and upon those tree we are the buds, if not yet the flowers, also is all about us — inside, the Spirit ; outside, the Word. And the two are ever trying to meet in us ; and when they meet, then the sign without, and the longing within, become one in light, and the man no more walketh in darkness, but knoweth whither he goeth.

CCXLIV.

And do not fear to hope. Can poet's brain
More than the Father's heart rich good invent ?
Each time we smell the autumn's dying scent,
We know the primrose time will come again ;
Not more we hope, nor less would soothe our pain.
Be bounteous in thy faith, for not misspent.

Is confidence unto the Father lent:
Thy need is sown and rooted for His rain.
His thoughts are as thine own; nor are His ways
Other than thine, but by their loftier sense
Of beauty infinite and love intense.
Work on. One day, beyond all thought of praise,
A sunny joy will crown thee with its rays;
Nor other than thy need, thy recompense.

CCXLV.

What we call evil is the only and best shape, which, for the person and his condition at the time, could be assumed by the best good.

CCXLVI.

Suppose God were building a palace for you, and had set up a scaffold upon which He wanted you to help Him; would it be reasonable in you to complain that you didn't find the scaffold at all a comfortable place to live in? — that it was draughty and cold? This world is that scaffold; and if you were busy carrying stones and mortar for the palace, you would be glad of all the cold to cool the glow of your labor.

CCXLVII.

"I don't know quite," said the curate "what to

think about that story of the woman they brought to Jesus in the temple — I mean how it got into that nook of the Gospel of St. John, where it has no right place. They didn't bring her for healing or for the rebuke of the demon, but for condemnation, only they came to the wrong man for that. They dared not carry out the law of stoning, as they would have liked, I suppose, even if Jesus had condemned her, but perhaps they hoped rather to entrap Him who was the friend of the sinners into saying something against the law. But what I want is, to know how it got there — just there, I mean betwixt the seventh and eighth chapters of St. John's Gospel. There is no doubt of its being an interpolation — that the twelfth verse, I think it is, ought to join on to the fifty-second. The Alexandrian manuscript is the only one of the three oldest that has it, and it is the latest of the three. I did think once but hastily, that it was our Lord's text for saying *I am the light of the world*, but it follows quite as well on His offer of living water. One can easily see how the place would appear a very suitable one to any presumptuous scribe who wished to settle the question of where it should stand. I wonder if St. John told the lovely tale as something he had forgotten after he had finished dictating all the rest. Or was it well known to all the evangelists, only no one of them was yet partaker enough of the spirit of Him who was the friend of sinners, to dare put it on written record,

thinking it hardly a safe story to expose to the quarrying of men's conclusions. But it doesn't matter much ; the tale must be a true one. Only — to think of just this one story, of the tenderest righteousness, floating about like a holy waif through the world of letters ! — a sweet gray dove of promise that can find no rest for the sole of its foot ! Just this one story of all stories, a kind of outcast ! and yet as a wanderer, oh how welcome ! Some manuscripts, I understand, have granted it a sort of outhouse-shelter at the end of the Gospel of St. Luke. But it all matters nothing, so long as we can believe it ; and true it must be, it is so like Him all through. And if it does go wandering as a stray through the Gospel without place of its own, what matters it so long as it can find hearts enough to nestle in, and bring forth its young of comfort ! Perhaps the woman herself told it, and, as with the woman of Samaria, some would and some would not believe her. Oh ! the eyes that met upon her ! The fiery hail of scorn from those of the Pharisees — the light of eternal sunshine from those of Jesus ! I was reading the other day, in one of the old Miracle Plays, how each that looked on while Jesus wrote with His finger on the ground, imagined He was writing down his individual sins, and was in terror lest his neighbor should come to know them. And wasn't He gentle even with those to whom He was sharper than a two-edged sword ! and oh how gentle to her He would

cover from their rudeness and wrong! *Let the sinless throw!* And the sinners went out, and she followed — to sin no more."

CCXLVIII.

If thy trouble be a trouble thy God cannot set right. then either thy God is not the true God or there is no true God, and the man who professed to reveal Him led the one perfect life in virtue of His faith in a falsehood. Alas! for poor men and women and their aching hearts! If it offend any of you that I speak of Jesus as *the man* who professed to reveal God, I answer that the man I see, and He draws me as with the strength of the adorable Truth.

Come, then, sore heart, and see whether His heart cannot heal thine. He knows what sighs and tears are, and if He knew no sin in Himself, the more pitiful must it have been to Him to behold the sighs and tears that guilt wrung from the tortured heart of His brethren and sisters. Brothers, sisters, we *must* get rid of this misery of ours. It is slaying us. It is turning the fair earth into a hell, and our hearts into its fuel. There stands the man who says He knows: take Him at His word. Go to Him who says in the might of His eternal tenderness and His human pity, *Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and*

learn of me : for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

CCXLIX.

O bountiful God who wilt give us back even our innocence tenfold ! He can give an awaking that leaves the past of the soul ten times farther behind than ever waking from sleep left the dreams of the night.

If the potency of that awaking lay in the inrush of a new billow of life fresh from its original source, carrying with it an enlargement of the whole nature in every part, a glorification of every faculty, every sense even, so that the man, forgetting nothing of his past or its shame, should yet cry out in the joy of his second birth, "Lo ! I am a new man ; I am no more he who did that awful and evil thing, for I am no more capable of doing it ! God be praised, for all is well !" would not such an awaking send the past afar into the dim distance of the first creation, and wrap the ill deed in the clean linen cloth of forgiveness, even as the dull creature of the sea rolls up the grain of intruding sand in the lovely garment of a pearl ? Such an awaking means God Himself in the soul, not disdaining closest vital company with the creature He foresaw and created. And the man knows in full con-

tent that he is healed of his plague. Nor would he willingly lose the scars which record its outbreak, for they tell him what he is without God, and set him ever looking to see that the door into the heavenly garden stands wide for God to enter the house when He pleases. And who can tell whether in the train of such an awakening may not follow a thousand opportunities and means of making amends to those whom he may have injured.

CCL.

Oh! to be clean as a mountain river! clean as the air above the clouds or on the middle seas! as the throbbing æther that fills the gulf betwixt star and star! — nay, as the thought of the Son of Man Himself, who, to make all things new and clean, stood up against the whole battery of sin-sprung suffering, withstanding and enduring and stilling the recoil of the awful force wherewith His Father had launched the worlds, and given birth to human souls with wills that might become free as His own.

CCLI.

Methought I floated sightless, nor did know
That I had ears until I heard the cry
As of a mighty man in agony:
“How long Lord shall I lie thus foul and slow?
The arrows of Thy lightning through me go

And sting and torture me — yet here I lie
A shapeless mass that scarce can mould a sigh.”
The darkness thinned; I saw a thing below,
Like sheeted corpse, a knot at head and feet.
Slow clomb the sun the mountains of the dead,
And looked upon the world: the silence broke!
A blinding struggle! then the thunderous beat
Of great exulting pinions stroke on stroke!
And from that word a mighty angel fled.

CCLII.

In the time of the old sacrifices, when God so kindly told His ignorant children to do something for Him in that way, poor people were told to bring, not a bullock or a sheep, for that was more than they could get, but a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. But now, as Crashaw, the poet, says, “ Our-selves become our own best sacrifice.” Depend upon it in the midst of all the science about the world and its ways, and all the ignorance of God and His greatness, the man or woman who can say, *Thy will be done*, with the true heart of giving up, is nearer the secret of things than the geologist and theologian.

CCLIII.

The common use of the word martyr is a curious instance of how words get degraded. The sufferings

involved in martyrdom, and not the pure will giving occasion to that suffering, is fixed upon by the common mind as the martyrdom. But while martyrdom really means a bearing for the sake of the truth, yet there is a way in which any suffering, even that we have brought upon ourselves, may become martyrdom. When it is so borne that the sufferer therein bears witness to the presence and Fatherhood of God, in quiet, hopeful submission to His will, in gentle endurance and that effort after cheerfulness which is not seldom to be seen where the effort is hardest to make ; more than all perhaps, and rarest of all, when it is accepted as the just and merciful consequence of wrong-doing, and is endured humbly, and with righteous shame, as the cleansing of the Father's hand, indicating that repentance unto life which lifts the sinner out of his sins, and makes him such that the holiest men of old would talk to him with gladness and respect, then indeed it may be called a martyrdom.

CCLIV.

Do you know, I believe that God wanted a grand poem from Milton, and therefore blinded him that he might be able to write it. But he had first trained him up to the point — given him thirty years in which he had not to provide the bread of a single day, only to learn and think ; then set him to teach boys ; then

placed him at Cromwell's side, in the midst of the tumultuous movement of public affairs, into which the late student entered with all his heart and soul, and then last of all He cast the veil of a divine darkness over him, sent him into a chamber far more retired than that in which he labored at Cambridge, and set him like the nightingale to sing darkling. The blackness about him was just the great canvass which God gave him to cover with forms of light and music. Deep wells of memory burst upwards from below; the windows of heaven were opened from above; from both rushed the deluge of song which flooded his soul, and which he has poured out in a great river to us. Who would not be glad to be struck with *such* blindness as Milton's?

CCLV.

It is not enough to satisfy God's goodness that He should give us all things richly to enjoy, but He must make us able to enjoy them as richly as He gives them. He has to consider not only the gift, but the receiver of the gift. He has to make us able to take the gift and make it our own, as well as to give us the gift. In fact it is not real giving, with the full, that is, the divine meaning of giving, without it. He has to give us to the gift as well as give the gift to us. Now for this, a break, an interruption is good, is invaluable.

for then we begin to think about the thing, and do something in the matter ourselves. The wonder of God's teaching is that, in great part, He makes us not merely learn, but teach ourselves, and that is far grander than if He only made our minds as He makes our bodies.

CCLVI.

Out of offence to the individual, God brings good to the whole ; for he pets no nation but trains it for the perfect globular life of all nations — of His world, of His universe. As He makes families mingle, to redeem each from its family selfishness, so will He make nations mingle, and love and correct and reform and develop each other, till the planet world shall go singing through space, one harmony to the God of the whole earth. The excellence must vanish from one portion, that it may be diffused through the whole.

CCLVII.

Of all teachings, that which presents a far distant God is the nearest to absurdity. Either there is none, or He is nearer to every one of us than our nearest consciousness of self. An unapproachable divinity is the veriest of monsters, the most horrible of human imaginations.

CCLVIII.

He was gradually learning that his faith must be an absolute one, claiming from God everything the love of a perfect Father could give, or the needs He had created in His child could desire; that he must not look to himself first for help, or imagine that the divine was only the supplement to the weakness and failure of the human; that the highest effort of the human was to lay hold of the divine. He learned that he could keep no simplest law in its loveliness until he was possessed of the same spirit whence that law sprung; that the one thing wherein he might imitate the free creative will of God was, to will the presence and power of that will which gave birth to his. It was the vital growth of his faith even when he was too much troubled to recognize the fact, that made him strong in the midst of weakness; when the Son of Man cried out, *Let this cup pass*, the Son of God in him could yet cry, *Let thy will be done*. He could "*inhabit trembling*," and yet be brave.

CCLIX.

There are those who, in their very first seeking of it, are nearer to the kingdom of heaven than many who have for years believed themselves of it. In the former there is more of the mind of Jesus, and when

He calls them they recognize Him at once and go after Him while the others examine Him from head to foot, and finding Him not sufficiently like the Jesus of their conception, turn their backs and go to church, or chapel, or chamber, to kneel before a vague form mingled of tradition and fancy. But the first shall be last and the last first, and there are from whom, be it penny or be it pound, what they have must be taken away because with them it lies useless.

CCLX.

What is Christianity? I know but one definition, the analysis of which, if the thing in question be a truth, must be the joyous labor of every devout heart to all eternity. For Christianity does not mean what you think, or what I think concerning Christ, but *is* of Christ. My Christianity, if ever I come to have any, will be what of Christ is in me; your Christianity now is what of Christ is in you.

CCLXI.

"The waves of infidelity," said the curate, "are coming in with a strong wind and flowing tide. Who is to blame? God it cannot be, and for unbelievers, they are as they were. It is the Christians who are to blame. I do not mean those who are called Christians,

but those who call and count themselves Christians. I tell you, and I speak to each one of whom it is true, that you hold and present such a withered, starved, miserable, death's-head idea of Christianity; that you are yourself such poverty-stricken believers, if believers you are at all; that the notion you present to the world as your ideal, is so commonplace, so false to the grand, gracious, mighty hearted Jesus—that *you* are the cause why the truth hangs its head in patience, and rides not forth on the white horse, conquering and to conquer. You dull its luster in the eyes of men; you deform its fair proportions; you represent not that which it is, but that which it is not, yet call yourselves by its name; you are not the salt of the earth, but a salt that has lost its savor, for ye seek all things else first, and to that seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness shall never be added. Until you repent and believe afresh, believe in a nobler Christ, namely, the Christ revealed by Himself, and not the muffled form of something vaguely human and certainly not all divine, which the false interpretations of men have substituted for Him, you will be as, I repeat, you are, the main reason why faith is so scanty in the earth, and the enemy comes in like a flood. For the sake of the progress of the truth, and that into nobler minds than yours, it were better you joined the ranks of the enemy, and declared what I fear with many of you is the fact, that you believe not at all. But whether

in some sense you believe or not, the fact remains, that, while you are not of those Christians who obey the word of the master, *doing* the things he says to them, you are of those Christians, if you *will* be called by the name, to whom he will say, *I never knew you; go forth into the outer darkness.*

“But oh what unspeakable bliss of heart and soul and mind and sense remains for him, who, like St. Paul, is crucified with Christ, who lives no more from his own self, but is inspired and informed and possessed with the same faith towards the Father in which Jesus lived and wrought the will of the Father! Truly the fate of mankind is a glorious one — and that, first and last, because men have a God supremely grand, all-perfect in Godhead; for that is, and that alone can be, the absolute bliss of the created.”

CCLXII.

Now that he understood more of the human heart, and recognized in this and that human countenance the bars of a cage through which peeped an imprisoned life, his own heart burned in him with the love of the helpless; and if there was mingled therein anything of the ambition of benefaction, anything of the love of power, anything of self-recommendation, pride of influence, or desire to be a center of good, and rule in a small kingdom of the aided and aiding, these

marshy growths had the fairest chance of dying an obscure death; for the one sun potent on the wheat for life and on the tares for death is the face of Christ Jesus, and in that presence the curate lived more and more from day to day.

CCLXIII.

A fine muscle is a fine thing, but the finest muscle of all, keeping the others going too, is the heart itself. That is the true Christian muscle. And the real muscular Christianity is that which pours in a life-giving torrent from the devotion of the heart, receiving only that it may give.

CCLXIV.

“Jesus buying and selling!” said the curate, to himself. “And why not? Did Jesus make chairs and tables, or boats perhaps which the people of Nazareth wanted, without any mixture of trade in the matter? Was there no transaction? No passing of money between hands? Did they not pay His Father for them? Was His Father’s way of keeping things going in the world too vile for the hands of Him whose being was delight in the will of the Father? No; there must be a way of handling money that is noble as the handling of the sword in the hands of the patriot. Neither

the mean man who loves it, nor the faithless man who despises it, knows how to handle it. The former is one who allows his dog to become a nuisance, the latter one who kicks him from his sight. The noble man is he who so truly does the work given him to do that the inherent nobility of that work is manifest. And the trader who trades nobly, is nobler surely than the high born who, if he carried the principles of his daily life into trade, would be as pitiful a sneak as any one that bows and scrapes falsely behind that altar of lies, his counter."

CCLXV.

Now that conscience had got up into the guard's seat, and will had taken the reins, he found all his intellectual faculties in full play, keeping well together, heads up and traces tight, while the outrider Imagination, with his spotted dog Fancy, was always far ahead, but never beyond the sound of the guard's horn; and ever as they went, object after object hitherto beyond the radius of his interest rose on the horizon of question, and began to glimmer in the dawn of human relation.

CCLXVI.

I doubt if wickedness does half as much harm as sectarianism, whether it be the sectarianism of the

church or of dissent, the sectarianism whose virtue is condescension, or the sectarianism whose vice is pride. Division has done more to hide Christ from the view of men than all the infidelity that has ever been spoken. It is the half-Christian clergy of every denomination that are the main cause of the so-called failure of the church of Christ. Thank God it has not failed so miserably as to succeed in the estimation or to the satisfaction of any party in it.

CCLXVII.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of some old man complete in lore,
My face would worship at his face,
Like childhood seated on the floor.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of childhood, loving, shy, apart,
The child should find a nearer place,
And teach me resting on my heart.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of maiden living all above,
My soul would trample down the base,
That she might have a man to love.

A grace I have no grace to win
Knocks now at my half-open door:
Ah Lord of glory, come Thou in,
The grace divine is all and more.

CCLXVIII.

True courtesy, that is, courtesy born of a true heart, is a most lovely and absolutely indispensable grace—one that nobody but a Christian can thoroughly develop. God grant us a “coming-on disposition,” as Shakespeare calls it. Who shall tell whose angel stands nearer to the face of the Father? Should my brother stand lower in the social scale than I, shall I not be more tender, and respectful, and self-refusing towards him, that God has placed him there who may all the time be greater than I?

CCLXIX.

What is a truism, as most men count truisms? What is it but a truth that ought to have been buried long ago in the lives of men—to send up forever the corn of true deeds and the wine of loving kindness—but, instead of being buried in friendly soil, is allowed to lie about, kicked hither and thither in the dry and empty garret of their brains, till they are sick of the sight and sound of it, and, to be rid of the thought of it, declare it to be no living truth but only a lifeless truism! Yet in their brain that truism must rattle until they shift it to its rightful quarters in their heart, where it will rattle no longer, but take root and be a strength and loveliness. Is a truth to cease to be

uttered because no better form than that of some divine truism—say of St. John Boanerges—can be found for it? To the critic the truism is a sea-worn, foot-trodden pebble; to the obedient scholar, a radiant topaz, which as he polishes it with the dust of its use may turn into a diamond.

CCLXX.

At first, Christianity seemed to men to have only to do with their conscience. That was the first relation. But even with art it was regarded as having no relation except for the presentment of its history. Afterwards, men forgot the conscience almost, in trying to make Christianity comprehensible to the understanding. Now, I trust, we are beginning to see that Christianity is everything or nothing. Either the whole is a lovely fable setting forth the loftiest longing of the human soul after the vision of the divine, or it is such a fact as is the heart not only of theology so-called, but of history, politics, science and art: the treasures of the Godhead must be hidden in Christ, and therefore by Him only can be revealed. This will interpret all things, or it has not yet been. Teachers of men have not taught this, because they have not seen it. If we do not find Him in nature, we may conclude either that we do not understand the expression of nature, or have mistaken ideas, or poor feelings about

Him. It is one great business in our life to find the interpretation which will render this harmony visible. Till we find it, we have not seen Him to be all in all. Recognizing a discord when they touched the notes of nature and society, the hermits forsook the instrument altogether, and contented themselves with a partial symphony, lofty, narrow and weak. Their example, more or less, has been followed by almost all Christians. Exclusion is so much the easier way of getting harmony in the orchestra, than study, insight and interpretation, that most have adopted it. It is for us, and all who have hope in the infinite God, to widen its basis as we may, to search and find the true tone and right idea, place and combination of instruments, until, to our enraptured ear, they all with one voice of multiform yet harmonious utterance declare the glory of God and of His Christ.

CCLXXI.

Let no man who wants to do anything for the soul of a man lose a chance of doing something for his body. He ought to be willing, and ready, which is more than willing, to do that whether or not; but there are those who need this reminder. Of many a soul Jesus laid hold by healing the suffering the body brought upon it. No one but Himself can tell how much the nucleus of the church was composed of and

by those who had received health from His hands, loving-kindness from the word of His mouth. My own opinion is, that herein lay the very germ of the kernel of what is now the ancient, was then the infant church ; that from them, next to the disciples themselves, went forth the chief power of life in love, for they too had seen the Lord, and in their own humble way could preach and teach concerning Him. What memories of Him theirs must have been !

CCLXXII.

To behold the face of Jesus seems to me the one thing to be desired. I do not know that it is to be prayed for ; but I think it will be given us as the great bounty of God, so soon as ever we are capable of it. That sight of the face of Jesus is, I think, what is meant by His glorious appearing, but it will come as a consequence of His spirit in us not as a cause of that spirit in us. The pure in heart shall see God. The seeing of Him will be the sign that we are like Him, for only by being like Him can we see Him as He is.

CCLXXIII.

What an awful thing to think that here we are on this great round tumbling ball of a world, held by the feet, and lifting up the head into infinite space—with-

out choice or wish of our own—compelled to think and to be, whether we will or not! Just God must know it to be very good, or He would not have taken it in His hands to make individual lives without a possible will of theirs. He must be our Father, or we are wretched creatures—the slaves of a fatal necessity. Did it ever strike you that each one of us stands on the apex of the world? With a sphere, you know, it must be so. And thus is typified, as it seems to me, that each one of us must look up for himself to find God, and then look abroad to find his fellows.

CCLXXIV.

What a wonderful thing waking is! The time of the ghostly moonshine passes by and the great positive sunlight comes. A man who dreams, and knows that he is dreaming, thinks he knows what waking is; but knows it so little, that he mistakes, one after another, many a vague and dim change in his dream, for an awaking. When the true waking comes at last, he is filled and overflowed with the power of its reality. So likewise, one who, in the darkness, lies waiting for the light about to be struck, and trying to conceive, with all the force of his imagination, what the light will be like, is yet, when the reality flames up before him, seized as by a new and unexpected thing, different from and beyond all his imagining. He feels

as if the darkness were cast to an infinite distance behind him. So shall it be with us when we wake from this dream of life into the truer life beyond, and find all our present notions of being thrown back as into a dim, vapory region of dreamland, where yet we thought we knew, and whence we looked forward into the present.

CCLXXV.

The sun like a golden knot on high,
Gathers the glories of the sky,
And binds them into a shining tent,
Roofing the world with the firmament.
And through the pavilion the rich winds blow,
And through the pavilion the waters go.
And the birds for joy and the trees for prayer,
Bowing their heads in the sunny air,
And for thoughts, the gently talking springs,
That come from the centre with secret things,
All make a music, gentle and strong,
Bound by the heart into one sweet song.
And amidst them all, the mother Earth
Sits with the children of her birth;
She tendeth them all as a mother hen
Her little ones round her twelve or ten:
Oft she sitteth, with hands on knee,
Idle with love for her family.
Go forth to her from the dark and the dust,
And weep beside her if weep thou must;
If she may not hold thee to her breast

Like a weary infant that cries for rest;
At least she will press thee to her knee,
And tell a low, sweet tale to thee,
Till the hue to thy cheek, and the light to thine eye,
Strength to thy limbs, and courage high
To thy fainting heart, return amain,
And away to work thou goest again.
From the narrow desert, O man of pride,
Come into the house so high and wide.

CCLXXVI.

They who believe in the influence of the stars over the fates of men are, in feeling at least, nearer the truth than they who regard the heavenly bodies as related to them merely by a common obedience to an external law. All that man sees, has to do with man. Worlds cannot be without an intermundane relationship. The community of the centre of all creation suggests an interradiating connection and dependence of the parts. Else a grander idea is conceivable than that which is already embodied. The blank, which is only a forgotten life lying behind the consciousness, and the misty splendor, which is an undeveloped life lying before it, may be full of mysterious revelations of other connections with the worlds around us, than those of science and poetry. No shining belt or gleaming moon, no red and green glory in a self-encircling twin-star, but has a relation

with the hidden things of a man's soul, and it may be, with the secret history of his body as well. They are portions of the living house wherein he abides.

CCXXLVII.

Without my will I find myself alive,
And must go forward. Is it God that draws
Magnetic all the souls unto their home,
Travelling, they know not how, but unto God?
It matters little what may come to me
Of outward circumstance as hunger, thirst
Social condition, yea, or love or hate;
But what shall I be, fifty summers hence?
My life, my being, all that meaneth me,
Goes darkling forward into something — what?
O God, Thou knowest. It is not my care.
If Thou wert less than truth, or less than love,
It were a fearful thing to be and grow
We know not what. My God, take care of me
Pardon and swathe me in an infinite love
Pervading and inspiring me, Thy child.
And let Thy own design in me work on,
Unfolding the ideal man in me!
Which being greater far than I have grown,
I cannot comprehend. I am Thine, not mine.
One day completed unto Thine intent
I shall be able to discourse with Thee;
For Thy Idea, gifted with a self,
Must be of one with the mind where it sprang,

And fit to talk with Thee about Thy thoughts,
Lead me, O Father, holding by Thy hand,
I ask not whither, for it must be on.

CCLXXVIII.

No doubt all the world, in all its moods, is human, as those for whose abode and instruction it was made. No doubt, it would be void of both beauty and significance to our eyes, were it not that it is one crowd of pictures of the human mind, blended in one living fluctuating whole. But these meanings are there, in solution as it were. The individual is a centre of crystallization to this solution. Around him meanings gather, are separated from other meanings; and if he be an artist, by which I mean true painter, true poet, or true musician, as the case may be, he so isolates and re-presents them, that we see them — not what nature shows to us, but what nature has shown to him, determined by his nature and choice. With it, is mingled therefore, so much of his own individuality, manifested both in this choice and certain modifications determined by his way of working, that you have not only a representation of an aspect of nature, as far as that may be with limited powers and materials, but a revelation of the man's own mind and nature. Consequently, there is a human interest in every attempt to reproduce nature, an interest of individuality

which does not belong to nature herself, who is for all and every man.

Every man is a convex mirror ; and his drawing, if he can make one, is an attempt to show what is in this little mirror of his, kindled there by the grand world outside. And the human mirrors being all differently formed, vary infinitely in what they should thus represent of the same scene. I have been greatly interested in looking alternately over the shoulders of two artists, both sketching in color the same, absolutely the same scene, both trying to represent it with all the truth in their power. How different, notwithstanding, the two representations came out !

CCLXXIX.

Every one likes to see his own thoughts set outside of him, that he may contemplate them *objectively*, as the philosophers call it. He likes to see the other side of them, as it were. Now those who can so set them forth are artists ; and however they may fail of effecting such a representation of their ideas as will satisfy themselves, they yet experience satisfaction in the measure in which they have succeeded. But there are many more men who cannot yet utter their ideas in any form. Mind, I do expect that, if they will only be good, they shall have this power some day ; for

I do think that many things we call differences in kind, may in God's grand scale prove to be only differences in degree. And indeed the artist—by artist, I mean of course, architect, musician, painter, poet, sculptor—in many things requires it just as much as the most helpless and dumb of his brethren, seeing in proportion to the things that he can do, he is aware of the things he cannot do, the thoughts he cannot express.

CCLXXX.

The more we see into nature, and try to represent it, the more ignorant and helpless we find ourselves, until sometimes I begin to wonder whether God might not have made the world so rich and full just to teach His children humility.

CCLXXXI.

It is impossible for an artist to make a mere transcript of nature. No man can help seeing nature as he is himself. For she has all in her. But if he sees no meaning in especial that he wants to give, his portrait of her will represent only her dead face, not her living, impassioned countenance. Artists ought to interpret nature, but that will only be to interpret

themselves—something of humanity that is theirs, whether they have discovered it or not. If to this they can add some teaching for humanity, then indeed they may claim to belong to the higher order of art, however imperfect they may be in their power of representing—however lowly, therefore, their position may be in that order.

CCLXXXII.

It is in the winter of the year that art must give us its summer. I suspect that most of the poetry about spring and summer is written in the winter. It is generally when we do not possess, that we lay full value upon what we lack.

CCLXXXIII.

Better to have the poet's heart than brain,
Feeling than song; but better far than both,
To be a song, a music of God's making;
Or but a table on which God's finger of flame,
In words harmonious, of triumphant verse,
That mingles joy and sorrow, sets down clear,¹
That out of darkness He hath called the light.
It may be voice to such is after given,
To tell the mighty tale to other worlds.

CCLXXXIV.

Why are all reflections lovelier than what we call the reality?—not so grand or so strong, it may be, but always lovelier? Fair as is the gliding sloop on the shining sea, the wavering, trembling, unresting sail below, is fairer still. Yea, the reflecting ocean itself, reflected in the mirror, has a wondrousness about its waters that somewhat vanishes when I turn toward itself. All mirrors are magic mirrors. The commonest room is a room in a poem when I turn to the glass. In whatever way it may be accounted for, of one thing we may be sure, that this feeling is no cheat; for there is no cheating in nature, and the simple, unsought feelings of the soul. There must be a truth involved in it, though we may but in part lay hold of the meaning. Even the memories of past pain are beautiful; and past delights, though beheld only through clefts in the gray clouds of sorrow, are lovely as Fairy-land.

CCLXXXV.

To the God of the human heart nothing that has ever been a joy, a grief, a passing interest, can ever cease to be what it has been; there is no fading at the breath of time, no passing away of fashion, no

dimming of old memories in the breast of Him whose being creates time.

CCLXXXVI.

Surely, the results of the past are the man's own. Any action of one man's upon which the life in him reposes, remains his. But suppose a man had done a good deed once, and instead of making that a foundation upon which to build more good, grew so vain of it that he became incapable of doing anything more of the same sort, you could not say that the action belonged to him still. Therein he has severed his connection with the past. Again, what has never in any deep sense been a man's own, cannot surely continue to be his afterwards. Thus the things that a man has merely possessed once, the very people who most admired him for their sakes when he had them, give him no credit for after he has lost them. Riches that have taken to themselves wings, leave with the poor man only a surpassing poverty. Strength, likewise, which can so little depend on any exercise of the will in man, passes from him with the years. It was not his all the time. It was but lent him, and had nothing to do with his inward force. A bodily feeble man may put forth a mighty life-strength in effort, and show nothing to the eyes of his neighbor, while the strong man gains endless admiration for

what he could hardly help. But the effort of the one remains, for it was his own ; the strength of the other passes from him, for it was never his own.

CCLXXXVII.

I think I remember all outside events, chiefly by virtue of the inward conditions with which they were associated. Mere outside things I am very ready to forget : moods of my own mind do not so readily pass away, and with the memory of some of them every outward circumstance returns. For a man's life is where the kingdom of heaven is — within him. There are people who, if you ask the story of their lives, have nothing to tell you but the course of the outward events that have constituted, as it were, the clothes of their history. But I know, at the same time, that some of the most important crisis in my own history, by which word, history, I mean my growth towards the right conditions of existence, have been beyond the grasp and interpretation of my intellect ; they have passed as it were, without my consciousness being awake enough to lay hold of their phenomena ; the wind had been blowing : I had heard the sound of it but knew not whence it came nor whither it went ; only when it was gone, I found myself more responsible, more eager than before.

CCXXXVIII.

As long as our Lord was with His disciples, they could not see Him right: He was too near them. Too much light, too many words, too much revelation, blinds or stupifies. The Lord had been with them long enough. They loved Him dearly, and yet often forgot His words almost as soon as He said them. He could not get it into them, for instance, that He had not come to be a king. Whatever He said, they shaped it over again after their own fancy: and their minds were so full of their own worldly notions of grandeur and command, that they could not receive into their souls the gift of God present before their eyes. Therefore He was taken away, that His spirit, which was more Himself than His bodily presence, might come into them — that they might receive the gift of God into their innermost being. After He had gone out of their sight, and they might look all around and down in the grave and up in the air and not see Him anywhere — when they thought they had lost Him, He began to come to them from the other side — from the inside. They found that the image of Him which His presence with them had printed in light upon their souls, began to revive in the dark of His absence; and not that only, but that in looking at it without the overwhelming of His bodily presence, lines and forms and meanings began to dawn out of

it, which they had never seen before. And His words came back to them, no longer as they had received them, but as He meant them. The spirit of Christ filling their hearts, and giving them new power, made them remember, by making them able to understand, all that He had said to them. They were then always saying to each other, "You remember how?" whereas before, they had been always staring at each other with astonishment, and something very near incredulity, while He spoke to them. So that after He had gone away, He was really nearer to them than He had ever been before. The meaning of anything is more than its visible presence. There is a soul in everything and that soul is the meaning of it.

CCLXXXIX.

Yea, some will mourn and sing about their loss,
And for the sake of sweet sounds cherish it,
Nor yet believe that it was more than seeming.
But he in whom the child's heart hath not died,
Hath grown a man's heart, loveth yet the Past;
Believes in all its beauty; knows the hours
Will melt the mists; and though this very day
Casts but a dull stone on Time's heaped-up cairn,
A morning light will break one morn and draw
The hidden glories of a thousand hues
Out from its crystal-depths and ruby-spots
And sapphire veins, unseen, unknown, before.

Far in the future lies his refuge. Time
Is God's, and all its miracles are His;
And in the Future he o'ertakes the Past,
Which was a prophecy of times to come :
There lie great flashing stars, the same that shone
In childhood's laughing heaven ; there lies the wonder
In which the sun went down and moon arose ;
The joy with which the meadows opened out
Their daisies to the warming sun of spring ;
Yea, all the inward glory, ere cold fear
Froze, or doubt shook the mirror of his soul
To reach it, he must climb the present slope
Of this day's duty — here he would not rest.
But all the time the glory is at hand
Urging and guiding.

CCXC.

The sea was so calm, and the shore so gently sloping, that you could hardly tell where the sand ceased and the sea began — the water sloped to such a thin pellicle, thinner than any knife's edge, upon the shining brown sand, and you saw the sand underneath the water to such a distance out. Yet this depth, which would not drown a red spider, was the ocean. In my mind I followed that bed of shining sand, bared of its hiding waters, out and out, till I was lost in an awful wilderness of chasms, precipices and mountain-peaks, in whose caverns the sea-serpent may dwell,

with his breath of pestilence ; the kraken, with his
skaly rind, "may there be sleeping

"His ancient, dreamless, uninvaded sleep,"
while

"faintest sunlights flee
About his shadowy sides,"
as he lies

"Battering on huge seaworms in his sleep."

There may be all the horrors that Schiller's diver encountered -- the frightful molch, and that worst of all to which he gives no name, which came creeping with a hundred knots at once ; but here, are only the gracious rainbow woven shells, an evanescent jelly or two, and the queer baby-crabs that crawl out from the holes of the bordering rocks. What awful gradations of gentleness lead from such as these down to those caverns where wallow the inventions of nature's infancy, when like a child of untutored imagination, she drew on the slate of her fancy creations in which flitting shadows of beauty serve only to heighten the shuddering grewsome horror ! The sweet sun and air, the hand of man, and the growth of the ages, have all but swept such from the upper plains of the earth ; what hunter's bow has twanged, what adventurer's rifle has cracked in those leagues of mountain waste, vaster than all the upper world can show, where "the beasts of the ocean graze the sea-weed their pasture !" Diana of the silver bow herself, when she descends

into the interlunar caves of hades, sends no such monsters fleeing from her spells. Yet if such there be, such horrors, too, must lie in the undiscovered caves of man's nature, of which all this outer world is but a typical analysis. By equally slow gradations may the inner eye descend from the truth of a Cordelia to the falsehood of an Iago. As these golden sands slope from the sunlight into the wallowing abyss of darkness, even so from the love of the child to his holy mother, slopes the inclined plane of humanity to the hell of the sensualist.

"But with this one difference in the moral world," I said aloud, as I paced up and down on the shimmering margin — "that everywhere in the scale the eye of the All-seeing Father can detect the first quiver of the eyelid that would raise itself heavenward, responsive to his waking spirit." I lifted my eyes in the relief of the thought, and saw how the sun of the autumn hung above the waters, oppressed with a mist of his own glory; far away to the left a man who had been clambering on a low rock, inaccessible save in such a tide, gathering mussels, threw himself into the sea and swam ashore; above his head the storm-tower stood in the stormless air; the sea glittered and shone, and the long-winged birds knew not which to choose, the balmy air, or the cool deep, now flitting like arrow-heads through the one, now alighting eag-

erly upon the other, to forsake it anew, for the thinner element. I thanked God for His glory.

CCXCI.

In regard to one of the vexed questions of the day, the rights of women—it seems to me that what women demand, it is not for men to withhold. It is not their business to lay down the law for women. That, women must lay down for themselves. I confess that, although I must herein seem to many of my readers old-fashioned and conservative, I should not like to see any woman I cared much for, either in parliament or in an anatomical class-room; but on the other hand I feel that women must be left free to settle that matter. If it is not good, good women will find it out, and recoil from it. If it is good, then God give them good speed. One thing they have a right to—a far wider and more valuable education than they have been in the habit of receiving. When the mothers are well taught, the generations will grow in knowledge at a four-fold rate. But still the teaching of life is better than all the schools, and common-sense than all learning. This common-sense is a rare gift, scantier in none than in those who lay claim to it on the ground of following commonplace, worldly and prudential maxims.

CCXCII.

One of the most important qualifications of a sick nurse is a ready smile. A long-faced nurse in a sick room, is a visible embodiment and presence of the disease, against which the eager life of the patient is fighting in agony. Such ought to be banished with their black dresses and their mourning-shop looks, from every sick chamber, and permitted to minister only to the dead, who do not mind looks. With what a power of life and hope does a woman—young or old, I do not care—with a face of the morning, a dress like the spring, a bunch of wild flowers in her hand, with the dew upon them, and perhaps in her eyes, too—I don't object to that—that is sympathy, not the worship of darkness—with what a message from nature and life does she, looking death in the face with a smile, dawn upon the vision of the invalid? She brings a little health, a little strength to fight, a little hope to endure, actually lapt in the folds of her gracious garments. For the soul itself can do more than any medicine, if it be fed with the truth of life.

CCXCIII.

It is not through the judgment that a troubled heart can be set at rest. It needs a revelation, a vision; a something for the higher nature that breeds and

unfolds the intellect, to recognize as its own, and lay hold of by faithful hope. And what fitter messenger of such hope than the harmonious presence of a woman, whose form, itself, tells of highest law, and concord, and uplifting obedience; such a one whose beauty walks the upper air of noble loveliness; whose voice, even in speech, is one of the "sphere-born harmonious sisters?" The very presence of such a being gives unbelief the lie, deep as the throat of her lying. Harmony, which is beauty and law, works necessary faith in the region capable of truth; it needs the intervention of no reasoning.

CCXCIV.

I believe that many women go into consumption just from discontent—the righteous discontent of a soul which is meant to sit at the Father's table, and so cannot content itself with the husks which the swine eat. The theological nourishment which is offered them, is generally no better than husks. They cannot live upon it, and so die and go home to their Father. And without good spiritual food to keep the spiritual senses healthy and true, they cannot see the things about them as they really are. They cannot find interest in them, because they cannot find their *own* place amongst them.

CCXCV.

In our poor weakness and narrowness and self-love, even of Jesus, the bodily may block out the spiritual nearness, which, however, in most moods we may be unable to realize the fact, is and remains a thing unutterably lovelier and better and dearer — enhancing tenfold what vision of a bodily presence may at some time be granted us. But how any woman can help casting herself heart and soul at the feet of such lowly grandeur, such a tender majesty, such a self-dissolving perfection — I cannot imagine. The truth must be that those who kneel not have not seen. You do not once read of a woman being against Him — except indeed it was His own mother, when she thought He was going all astray and forgetting His high mission. The divine love in Him towards His Father in heaven and His brethren of men, was ever melting down His conscious individuality in sweetest showers upon individual hearts ; He came down like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. No woman, no man surely ever saw Him as He was and “did not worship !”

CCXCVI.

Among women, was it not always to peasant women that heavenly messages came? See revelation culmi-

nate in Elizabeth and Mary, the mothers of John the Baptist and Jesus. Think how much fitter that it should be so — that they to whom the word of God comes, should be women bred in the dignity of a natural life, and familiarity with the large ways of the earth ; women of simple and few wants, without distraction and with time for reflection — compelled to reflection indeed, from the enduring presence of an unsullied consciousness : for wherever there is a humble, thoughtful nature, into that nature the divine consciousness, that is, the spirit of God, passes as into its own place. Holy women are to be found every where, but the prophetess is not so likely to be found in the city as in the hill-country.

CCXCVII.

Some people can thrive tolerably without much thought : at least they both live comfortably without it, and do not seem to be capable of effecting it, if it were required of them ; while for others a large amount of mental and spiritual operation is necessary for the health of both body and mind, and when the matter or occasion for so much is not afforded them, the consequence is analagous to what follows when a healthy physical system is not supplied with sufficient food : the oxygen, the source of life, begins to consume the

life itself; it tears up the timbers of the house to burn against the cold. Or, to use a different simile, when the Moses-rod of circumstance does not strike the rock and make the waters flow, such a mind—one that must think to live—will go digging into itself, and is in danger of injuring the very fountain of thought, by drawing away its living water into ditches and stagnant pools.

CCXCVIII.

Humanity may, like other vital forms, diseased systems, fix on this or that as the object not merely of its desire but of its need: it can never be stilled by less than the bread of life—the very presence in the innermost nature of the Father and the Son.

CCXCIX.

It is wonderful upon how little rare natures, capable of making the most of things, will live and thrive. There is a great deal more to be got out of things than is generally got out of them, whether the thing be a chapter of the Bible, or a yellow turnip, and the marvel is, that those who use the most material should so often be those that show the least result in strength or character?

CCC.

Father, I cry to Thee for bread,
With hungered longing, eager prayer;
Thou hear'st, and givest me instead
More hunger and a half despair.

O Lord! how long? My days decline
My youth is lapped in memories old,
I need not bread alone, but wine —
See, cup and hand to Thee I hold.

And yet Thou givest: thanks O Lord!
That still my heart with hunger faints!
The day will come when at Thy board
I sit forgetting all my plaints.

If rain must come and winds must blow,
And I pore long o'er dim seen chart.
Yet, Lord, let not the hunger go,
And keep the faintness at my heart.

CCCI.

It may be said of the body in regard of sleep as well as in regard of death, "it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." No one can deny the power of the wearied body to paralyze the soul: but I have a correlate theory which I love, and which I expect to find true that, while the body wearies the mind, it is the mind that restores vigor to the body, and then, like the man who has built him a stately palace, re-

joices to dwell in it. I believe that the mind in the quiescence of its consciousness in sleep comes into a less disturbed contact with its origin, the heart of the creation ; whence, gifted with calmness and strength for itself, it grows able to impart comfort and restoration to the weary frame. The cessation of labor affords but the necessary occasion ; makes it possible, as it were, for the occupant of an outlying station in the wilderness to return to his father's house for fresh supplies of all that is needful for life and energy. The child-soul goes home at night, and returns in the morning to the labors of the school. Mere physical rest could never of its own negative self, build up the frame in such light and vigor as come through sleep.

CCCII.

When round the earth the Father's hands
Have gently drawn the dark ;
Sent off the sun to freshen lands,
And curtained in the lark ;
'Tis sweet, all tired with glowing day,
To fade with fading light ;
To lie once more, the old weary way,
Upfolded in the night.

If mothers o'er our slumbers bend,
And unripe kisses reap,
In soothing dreams with sleep they blend,
'Till even in dreams we sleep.

And if we wake while night is dumb,
 'Tis sweet to turn and say,
It is an hour ere dawning come,
 And I will sleep till day,

There is a dearer, warmer bed
 Where one all day may lie,
Earth's bosom pillowing the head,
 And let the world go by.
There come no watching mother's eyes ;
 The stars instead look down :
Upon it breaks, and silent dies,
 The murmur of the town.

The great world, shouting, forward fares :
 His chamber, hid from none,
Hides safe from all, for no one cares
 For him whose work is done,
Cheer thee, my friend ; bethink thee how
 A certain unknown place,
Or here, or there, is waiting now,
 To rest thee from thy race.

Nay, nay, not there the rest from harms,
 The slow composed breath !
Not there the folding of the arms !
 Not there the sleep of death !
It needs no curtained bed to hide
 The world with all its wars ;
No grassy cover to divide
 From sun and moon and stars.

There is a rest that deeper grows
 In midst of pain and strife ;

A mighty, conscious, willed repose,
The death of deepest life.
To have and hold the precious prize
No need of jealous bars;
But windows open to the skies,
And skill to read the stars.

Who dwelleth in that secret place,
Where tumult enters not,
Is never cold with terror base,
Never with anger hot.
For if an evil host should dare
His very heart invest,
God is his deeper heart and there
He enters into rest.

When mighty sea-winds madly blow,
And tear the scattered waves,
Peaceful as summer woods, below
Lie darkling ocean caves:
The wind of words may toss my heart,
But what is that to me!
'Tis but a surface storm — Thou art
My deep, still, resting sea.

CCCIII.

My heart is full of inarticulate pain,
And beats laborious. Cold ungenial looks
Invade my sanctuary. Men of gain,
Wise in success, well-read in feeble books,
No nigher come, I pray: your air is drear;
'Tis winter and low skies when ye appear.

Beloved, who love beauty and fair truth !

Come nearer me ; too near ye cannot come ;
Make me an atmosphere with your sweet youth ;
Give me your souls to breathe in a large room
Speak not a word, for see my spirit lies
Helpless and dumb ; shine on me with your eyes.

O all wide places, far from feverous towns !

Great shining seas ! pine forests ! mountains wild !
Rock-bosomed shores ! rough heaths ! and sheep-cropt downs !
Vast pallid clouds ! blue spaces undefiled !
Room ! give me room ! give loneliness and air !
ree things and plenteous in your regions fair.

White dove of David, flying overhead,

Golden with sunlight on thy snowy wings,
Outspeeding thee my longing thoughts are fled
To find a home afar from men and things ;
Where in His temple, earth o'erarched with sky,
God's heart to mine may speak, my heart reply.

O God of mountains, stars and boundless spaces !

God of freedom and of joyous hearts !
When Thy face looketh forth from all men's faces.
There will be room enough in crowded marts ;
Brood thou around me, and the noise is o'er ;
Thy universe my closet with shut door.

Heart, heart awake ! The love that loveth all

Maketh a deeper calm than Horeb's cave,
God in thee, can His children's folly gail ?

Love may be hurt, but shall not love be brave ? —
Thy holy silence sinks in dews of balm ;
Thou art my solitude, my mountain calm.

CCCIV.

Only in himself *can* a man find the finite to worship ; only in turning back upon himself does he create the finite for and by his worship. All the works of God are everlasting ; the only perishable are some of the works of man. All love is a worship of the infinite ; what is called a man's love for himself, is not love ; it is but a phantastic resemblance of love ; it is a creating of the finite, a creation of death.

CCCV.

It is not immortality the human heart cries out after, but that immortal eternal thought whose life is its life, whose wisdom is its wisdom, whose ways and whose thoughts shall — must one day — become its ways and its thoughts. Dissociate immortality from the living immortality, and it is not a thing to be desired — not a thing that can on those terms, or even on the fancy of those terms, be desired.

CCCVI.

I have roamed the world and reaped many harvests. In the deepest agony I have never refused the consolations of Nature or of Truth. I have never knowingly accepted any founded in falsehood, in forgetful-

ness, or in distraction. Let such as have no hope in God drink of what Lethe they can find ; to me it is a river of hell, and altogether abominable. I could not be content even to forget my sins. There can be but one deliverance from them, namely, that God and they should come together in my soul. In His presence I shall serenely face them. Without Him I dare not think of them. With God a man can confront anything ; without God he is but the withered straw which the sickle of the reaper has left standing on a wintry field. But to forget them would be to cease and begin anew, which to one aware of his immortality is a horror.

CCCVII.

I think that nothing made is lost :
That not a moon has ever shone,
That not a cloud my eyes hath crossed
But to my soul is gone.

That all the lost years garnered lie
In this Thy casket, my dim soul ;
And Thou wilt once, the key apply,
And show the shining whole.

CCCVIII.

What God-like relation can the ever-living, life-giving, changeless God, hold to creatures who partake not

of His life ; who have death at the very core of their being, are not worth their Maker's keeping alive? To let His creatures die would be to change, to abjure His Godhood, to cease to be that which He had made Himself. If they are not worth keeping alive, then His creating is a poor thing, and He is not so great, nor so divine, as even the poor thoughts of those His dying creatures have been able to imagine Him. But our Lord says, "All live unto him." With Him death is not. Thy life sees our life, O Lord. All of whom *all* can be said are present to Thee. Thou thinkest about us, eternally more than we think about Thee. The little life that burns within the body of this death, glows unquenchable in Thy true-seeing eyes. If Thou didst forget us for a moment, then indeed, death would be. But unto Thee we live. The beloved pass from our sight, but they pass not from Thine. This that we call death, is but a form in the eyes of men. It looks something final, an awful cessation, an utter change. It seems not probable that there is anything beyond. But if God could see us before we were, and make us after His ideal, that we shall have passed from the eyes of our friends can be no argument that He beholds us no longer. *All live unto Him.* Let the change be ever so great, ever so imposing ; let the unseen life be ever so vague to our conception, it is not against reason to hope that God could see Abraham after his Isaac had ceased to see

him ; saw Isaac after Jacob had ceased to see him ; saw Jacob after some of the Sadducees had began to doubt whether there ever had been a Jacob at all. He remembers them ; that is, He carries them in His mind ; He of whom God thinks, lives. He takes to Himself the name of *their* God. The Living One cannot name Himself, after the dead, when the very Godhead lies in the giving of life. Therefore they must be alive. If He speaks of them, remembers His own loving thoughts of them, would He not have kept them alive if He could ; and if He could not, how could He create them ? Can it be an easier thing to call into life than to keep alive ?

CCCIX.

Give God thy dead to bury. Say — If it die
Yet Thou, the life of life, art still alive,
And Thou can'st make Thy dead alive again."

Ah God ! the earth is full of cries and moans :
And dull despair, that neither moans nor cries ;
Thousands of hearts are waiting helplessly ;
The whole creation groaneth, travaileth
For what it knows not, but with dull-eyed hope
Of resurrection, or of dreamless death !
Raise Thou the dead of Aprils past and gone
In hearts of maidens ; restore the autumn fruits
Of old men feebly mournful oe'r the life
Which scarce hath memory, but this mournfulness.
There is no past with Thee ; bring back once **more**

The summer eves of lovers over which
The wintry wind that raveth through the world
Heaps wretched leaves, half tombed in ghastly snow;
Bring back the mother-heaven of orphans lone,
The brother's and the sister's faithfulness;
Bring forth the kingdom of the Son of Man.

They troop around me, children wildly crying;
Women with faded eyes, all spent of tears:
Men who have lived for love yet lived alone,
And other worse whose grief cannot be said.
O God, Thou hast a work fit for Thy strength,
To save these hearts of Thine with full content —
Except Thou give them Lethe's stream to drink
And that, my God, were all unworthy Thee.

Dome up, O heaven! yet higher o'er my head;
Back, back horizon! widen out my world;
Rush in, O infinite sea of the Unknown
For, though He slay me, I will trust in God.

CCCX.

At whatever time death may arrive, or in whatever condition the man may be at the time, it comes as the best and only good that can at that moment reach him. We are, perhaps, too much in the habit of thinking of death as the culmination of disease, which, regarded only in itself, is an evil, and a terrible evil. But I think rather of death as the first pulse of the new strength, shaking itself free from the old mouldy remnants of earth-garments, that it may begin in freedom the new life that grows out of the old. The cater-

pillar dies into the butterfly. Who knows but disease may be the coming, the keener life, breaking into this and beginning to destroy like fire the inferior modes or garments of the present? And then disease would be but the sign of the salvation of fire; of the agony of the greater life to lift us to itself, out of that wherein we are failing and sinning.

CCCXI.

Shall God be the God of the families of the earth, and shall the love that He has thus created towards father and mother, brother and sister, wife and child, go moaning and longing to all eternity; or worse, far worse, die out of our bosoms? Shall God be God, and shall this be the end?

Ah, my friends! what will resurrection or life be to me, how shall I continue to love God as I have learned to love Him through you, if I find He cares so little for this human heart of mine, as to take from me the gracious visitings of your faces and forms? True, I might have a gaze at Jesus, now and then; but He would not be so good as I had thought Him. And how should I see Him if I could not see you? God will not take you, has not taken you from me to bury you out of my sight in the abyss of His own unfathomable being, where I cannot follow and find you, myself lost in the same awful gulf. No, our God

is an unveiling, a revealing God. He will raise you from the dead that I may behold you ; that that which vanished from the earth may again stand forth, looking out of the same eyes of eternal love and truth, holding out the same mighty hand of brotherhood, the same delicate and gentle, yet strong hand of sisterhood, to me, this me that knew you, and loved you, in the days gone by. I shall not care that the matter of the forms I loved a thousand years ago, has returned to mingle with the sacred goings on of God's science, upon that far-off world wheeling its nursery of growing loves and wisdoms through space ; I shall not care that the muscle which now sends the ichor through your veins is not formed of the very particles which once sent the blood to the pondering brain, the flashing eye, or the nervous right arm ; I shall not care, I say, so long as it is yourselves that are before me, beloved ; so long as through these forms I know that I look on my own, on my loving souls of the ancient time ; so long as my spirits have got garments of revealing, after their own old lovely fashion, garments to reveal themselves to me. The new shall then be dear as the old, and for the same reason, that it reveals the old love. And in the changes, which, thank God, must take place when the mortal puts on immortality, shall we not feel that the nobler our friends are, the more they are themselves ; that the more the idea of each is carried out in the perfection

of beauty, the more like are they to what we thought them in our most exalted moods, to that which we saw them in the rarest moments of profoundest communion, to that which we beheld through the veil of all their imperfections when we loved them the truest?

CCCXII.

Think, brothers, think, sisters, we walk in the air of an eternal Fatherhood. Every uplifting of the heart is a looking up to the Father. Graciousness and truth are around, above, beneath us, yea, *in* us. When we are least worthy, then, most tempted, hardest, unkindest, let us commend our spirits into His hands. Whither else dare we send them? How the earthly father would love a child who would creep into his room with angry, troubled face, and sit down at his feet, saying when asked what he wanted, "I feel so naughty, papa, and I want to get good!" Would he say to his child, "How dare you! Go away and be good, and then come to me?" And shall we dare to think God would send us away if we came thus, and would not be pleased that we came, even if we were angry as Jonah? Would we not let all the tenderness of our nature flow forth upon such a child? And shall we dare to think that if we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children; God will not give us His own Spirit when we come to ask Him?

Will not some heavenly dew descend cool upon the hot anger? some genial raindrop on the dry selfishness? some glance of sunlight on the cloudy hopelessness? Bread, at least, will be given, and not a stone; water, at least, will be sure, and not vinegar mingled with gall.

Nor is there anything we can ask for ourselves that we may not ask for another. We may commend any brother, any sister, to the common fatherhood. And there will be moments when, filled with that Spirit which is the Lord, nothing will ease our hearts of their love but the commending of all men, all our brothers, all our sisters, to the one Father. Nor shall we ever know that repose in the Father's hands, that rest of the Holy Sepulchre which the Lord knew when the agony of death was over, when the storm of the world died away behind His retiring spirit, and He entered the regions where there is only life, and all that is not music is silence (for all noise comes of the conflict of Life and Death), we shall never be able, I say, to rest in the bosom of the Father, till the fatherhood is fully revealed to us in the love of the brothers. For He cannot be our Father save as He is their Father; and if we do not see Him and feel Him as their Father, we cannot know Him as ours. Never shall we know Him aright until we rejoice and exult for our race that He is *the* Father.

CCCXIII.

Come to me, come to me, O my God ;

Come to me everywhere !

Let the trees mean Thee, and the grassy sod,

And the water and the air,

For Thou art so far that I often doubt,

As on every side I stare,

Searching within, and looking without,

If Thou art anywhere.

How did men find Thee in days of old ?

How did they grow so sure ?

They fought in Thy name, they were glad and bold,

They suffered and kept themselves pure.

But now they say — neither above the sphere,

Nor down in the heart of man,

But only in fancy, ambition or fear,

The thought of Thee began.

If only that perfect tale were true

Which with touch of sunny gold

Of the ancient many makes one anew,

And simplicity manifold.

But He said that they who did His word,

The truth of it should know :

I will try to do it — if He be Lord

Perhaps the old spring will flow :

Perhaps the old spirit-wind will blow
That He promised to their prayer ;
And doing Thy will, I yet shall know
Thee, Father, everywhere ?

CCCXIV.

Am I going to sleep—to lose consciousness—to be helpless for a time—thoughtless—dead? Or, more awful consideration, in the dreams that may come may I not be weak of will and scant of conscience. “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” I give myself back to Thee. Take me, soothe me, refresh me, “Make me over again.” Am I going out into the business and turmoil of the day, where so many temptations may come, to do less honorably, less faithfully, less kindly, less diligently, than the Ideal Man would have me do?—Father into thy hands. Am I going to do a good deed? Then, of all times—Father into thy hands; lest the enemy should have me now. Am I going to do a hard duty, from which I would gladly be turned aside—to refuse a friend’s request, to urge a neighbor’s conscience?—Father into thy hands I commend my spirit. Am I in pain? Is illness coming upon me to shut out the glad visions of a healthy brain, and bring me such as are troubled and untrue?—Take my spirit, Lord, and see, as thou art wont, that it has no more to bear than

it can bear. Am I going to die? Thou knowest, if only from the cry of Thy Son, how terrible that is ; and if it comes not to me in so terrible a shape as that in which it came to Him, think how poor to bear I am beside Him. I do not know what the struggle means ; for, of the thousand who pass through it every day, not one enlightens his neighbor left behind ; but shall I not long with agony for one breath of Thy air and not receive it? shall I not be torn asunder with dying?—Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. For it is Thy business, not mine. Thou wilt know every shade of my suffering ; Thou wilt care for me with Thy perfect fatherhood ; for that makes my worship, and inwraps and infolds it. As a child I could bear great pain when my father was leaning over me, or had his arm about me : how much nearer my soul cannot Thy hands come ! yea, with a comfort, Father of me, that I have never yet even imagined ; for how shall my imagination overtake Thy swift heart? I care not for the pain, so long as my spirit is strong, and into Thy hands I commend that spirit. If Thy love which is better than life, receive it, then surely Thy tenderness will make it great.

CCCXV.

He who loves not his brother for deeper reasons than those of a common parentage will cease to love

him at all. The love that enlarges not its borders, that is not ever spreading and including, and deepening, will contract, shrivel, decay, die. I have had the sons of my mother that I may learn the universal brotherhood. For there is a bond between me and the most wretched liar that ever died for the murder he would not even confess, closer, infinitely, than that which springs only from having one father and mother. That we are the sons and daughters of God, born from His heart, the outcoming offspring of His love, is a bond closer, than all other bonds in one. No man ever loved his child aright, who did not love him for his humanity, for his divinity, to the utter forgetting of his origin, from himself. The son of my mother is indeed my brother by this greater and closer bond as well ; but if I recognize that bond between him and me at all, I recognize it for my race. True, and thank God ! the greater excludes not the less ; it makes all the weaker bonds stronger and truer, nor forbids that where all are brothers, some should be those of our bosom. Still my brother according to the flesh is my first neighbor that we may be very nigh to each other, whether we will or no, while our hearts are tender, and so may learn *brotherhood*. For our love to each other is but the throbbing of the heart of the great brotherhood, and could come only from the eternal Father, not from our parents.

CCCXVI.

The highest condition of the Human Will, as distinct, not as separated from God, is when, not seeing God, not seeming to grasp Him at all, it yet holds Him fast. It cannot continue in this condition, for not finding, not seeing God, the man would die; but the will thus asserting itself, the man has passed from death unto life, and the vision is nigh at hand. Then first thus free in thus asserting its freedom, is the individual will one with the Will of God; the child is finally restored to the father; the childhood and the fatherhood meet in one; the brotherhood of the race arises from the dust, and the prayer of our Lord is answered, "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Let us then, arise in God-born strength every time that we feel the darkness closing, or become aware that it has closed around us, and say, "I am of the Light and not of the Darkness." Troubled soul, thou art not bound to feel, but thou art bound to arise. God loves thee whether thou feelest or not. Thou canst not love when thou wilt, but thou art bound to fight the hatred in thee to the last. Try not to feel good when thou art not good, but cry to Him who is good. He changes not because thou changest. Nay, He has an especial tenderness of love towards thee for that thou art in the dark and hast no light, and His heart is glad when

thou dost arise and say, "I will go to my Father." For He sees thee through all the gloom through which thou canst not see Him. Will thou His will. Say to Him, "My God, I am very dull and low and hard; but Thou art wise and high and tender, and Thou art my God. I am Thy child. Forsake me not." Then fold the arms of thy faith, and wait in quietness until light goes up in the darkness. Fold the arms of thy Faith I say, but not of thy Action: bethink thee of something that thou oughtest to do, and go and do it, if it be but the sweeping of a room, or the preparing of a meal, or a visit to a friend: Heed not thy feelings: do thy work.

As God lives by His own will, and we live in Him, so has He given us power to will in ourselves. How much better should we not fare if, finding that we are standing with our heads bowed away from the good, finding that we have no feeble inclination to seek the source of our life, we should yet *will* upwards toward God, rousing that essence of life in us, which He has given us from His own heart, to call again upon Him who is our Life, who can fill the emptiest heart, rouse the deadest conscience, quicken the dullest feeling, and strengthen the feeblest will.

Then, if ever the time should come, as perhaps it must come to each of us, when all consciousness of well-being shall have vanished, when the earth shall be but a sterile promontory, and the heavens a dull

and pestilent congregation of vapors, when man nor woman shall delight us more, nay, when God Himself shall be but a name, and Jesus an old story, then, even then, when a Death far worse than "that phantom of grisly bone," is griping at our hearts, and having slain love, hope, faith, forces existence upon us only in agony, then, even then, we shall be able to cry out with our Lord, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Nor shall we die then, I think, without being able to take up His last words as well, and say, "*Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.*"

CCCXVII.

Our longing desires can no more exhaust the fulness of the treasures of the Godhead, than our imagination can touch their measure. Of Him not a thought, not a joy, not a hope of one of His creatures can pass unseen; and while one of them remains unsatisfied, He is not Lord over all.

Therefore with angels and with archangels, with the spirits of the just made perfect, with the little children of the kingdom, yea, with the Lord Himself, and for all them that know Him not, we praise and magnify and laud His name in itself, saying, *Our Father*. We do not draw back for that we are unworthy, nor even for that we are hard-hearted, and care not for the good. For it is His childlikeness that makes Him our

God and Father. The perfection of His relation to us swallows up all our imperfections, all our defects, all our evils ; for our childhood is born of His fatherhood. That man is perfect in faith who can come to God in the utter death of his feelings and his desires, without a glow or an aspiration, with the weight of low thoughts, failures, neglects, and wandering forgetfulness, and say to Him "Thou art my refuge, because Thou art my home."

CCCXVIII.

That every man has affairs, and those his first affairs with God, stands to the reason of every man who associates any meaning or feeling with the words, Maker, Father, God. Were we but children of a day, with the understanding that some one had given us that one holiday, there would be something to be thought, to be felt, to be done, because we knew it. For then our nature would be according to our fate, and we could worship and die. But it would be only the praise of the dead, not the praise of the living, for death would be the deepest, the lasting, the overcoming. We should have come out of nothingness, not out of God. He could only be our Maker, not our Father, our Origin. But now we know that God cannot be the God of the dead—must be the God of the living ; inasmuch as to know that we died, would

freeze the heart of worship, and we could not say Our God, or feel Him worthy of such *Worth*-ship as we could render. To him who offers unto this God of the living his own self of sacrifice, to him that overcometh, him who has brought his individual life back to its source, who knows that he is one of God's children *thus* one of the Father's making, He giveth the white stone. To him who climbs on the stair of all his God-born efforts and God-given victories up to the height of his being — that of looking face to face upon his ideal self in the bosom of the Father — God's *him*, realized in him through the Father's love in the Elder Brother's devotion — to him God gives the new name written.

Moreover the name is one "which no man knoweth saving he which receiveth it." Not only then has each man his individual relation to God, but each man has his peculiar relation to God. He is to God a peculiar being, made after his own fashion, and that of no one else; for when he is perfected he shall receive the new name which no one else can understand. Hence he can worship God as no man else can worship Him — can understand God as no man else can understand Him. As the fir tree lifts up itself with a far different need from the need of the palm-tree, so does each man stand before God, and lift up a different humanity to the common Father. And for each God has a different response. With every man

He has a secret—the secret of the new name. In every man there is a loneliness, an inner chamber of peculiar life into which God only can enter. I say not it is *the innermost chamber*—but a chamber into which no brother, nay, no sister can come.

From this it follows that there is a chamber also—(O God, humble and accept my speech)—a chamber in God Himself, into which none can enter but the one, the individual, the peculiar man—out of which chamber that man has to bring revelation and strength for his brethren. This is that for which he was made—to reveal the secret things of the Father.

Each of us is a distinct flower or tree in the spiritual garden of God—precious each for his own sake, in the eyes of Him who is even now making us—each of us watered and shone upon and filled with life, for the sake of his flower, his completed being, which will blossom out of him at last to the glory and pleasure of the great gardener. For each has within him a secret of the Divinity; each is growing towards the revelation of that secret to himself, and so to the full reception, according to his measure of the divine. Every moment that he is true to his true self, some new shine of the white stone, breaks on his mind's eye, some fresh channel is opened upward for the coming glory of the flower, the conscious offering of his whole being in beauty to the Maker. Each man, then, is in God's sight worth. Life and action,

thought and intent, are sacred. And what an end lies before us ! To have a consciousness of our own ideal being flashed into us from the thought of God ! Surely for this we may well give way all our paltry self-consciousnesses, our self-admirations and self-worships ! Surely to know what He thinks about us will pale out of our souls all our thoughts about ourselves !

CCCXIX.

Our Lord became flesh, but did not *become* man. He took on Him the form of man ; He was man already. And He was, is, and ever shall be, divinely child-like. He could never have been a child if He would ever have ceased to be a child, for in Him the transient found nothing. Childhood belongs to the divine nature. Obedience, then, is as divine as Will. Service as divine as Rule. How ? Because they are one in their nature ; they are both a doing of the truth. The love in them is the same. The Fatherhood and the Sonship are one, save that the Fatherhood looks down lovingly, and the Sonship looks up lovingly. Love is all. And God is all in all.

CCCXX.

For three and thirty years, a living seed,
A lonely gem, dropt on our waste world's side,
Thy death and rising Thou didst calmly bide ;

Love companied by many a clinging weed
Sprung from the fallow soil of evil and of need ;
Hither and thither tossed and by friends denied ;
Pitied of goodness dull, and scorned of pride
Until at length was done the awful deed,
And Thou didst lie outworn in stony bower.
Three days asleep — oh, slumber God-like brief.
For men of sorrows and acquaint with grief !
Heaven's seed Thou diedst, that out of Thee might tower
Aloft with rooted stem and shadowy leaf,
Of all humanity the crimson flower.

CCCXXI.

How could the Son of God be tempted? If any one say that He was not moved by those temptations in the wilderness, he must be told that then there were no temptations to Him, and He was not tempted ; nor was His victory of more significance than that of the man who, tempted to bear false witness against his neighbor, abstains from robbing him of his goods. For human need, struggle and hope, it bears no meaning ; and we must reject the whole as a fantastic folly of crude invention ; a mere stage-show ; a lie for the poor sake of the fancied truth : a doing of evil that good might come ; and, with how many fragments soever of truth its mind may be filled, not in any way to be received as a divine message.

But asserting that there were real temptations, if the story is to be received at all, am I not involving

myself in a greater difficulty still? For how could the Son of God be tempted with evil — with that which must to Him appear in its true colors of discord, its true shapes of deformity? Or how could He then be the Son of His Father who cannot be tempted with evil?

In the answer to this lies the centre, the essential germ of the whole interpretation: He was not tempted with Evil but with Good; with inferior forms of good, that is, pressing in upon Him, while the higher forms of good held themselves aloof, biding their time, that is, God's time. I do not believe that the Son of God could be tempted with evil, but I do believe that He could be tempted with good — to yield to which temptation would have been evil in Him — ruin to the universe.

CCCXXII.

To the Son of God the will of God is Life. It was a temptation to show the powers of the world that He was the Son of God; that to Him the elements were subject; that He was above the laws of Nature, because He was the Eternal Son; and thus stop the raging of the heathen, and the vain imaginations of the people. It would be but to shew them the truth. But He was the *Son* of God: what was His *Father's* will? Such was not the divine way of convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. If the

Father told Him to cast Himself down, that moment the pinnacle pointed naked to the sky. If the devil threw Him down, let God send His angels; or, if better, allow Him to be dashed to pieces in the valley below. But never will He forestall the divine will. The Father shall order what comes next. The Son will obey. In the path of His work He will turn aside for no stone. There let the angels bear Him in their hands if need be. But He will not choose the path because there is a stone in it. He will not choose at all. He will go where the Spirit leads Him.

CCCXXIII.

Everything in God's doing comes harmoniously with and from all the rest. Son of Man, His history shall be a man's history, shall be The Man's history. Shall that begin with an exception? Yet it might well be a temptation to Him who longed to do all He could for men. He was the Son of God: why should not the sons of God know it?

But as this temptation in the wilderness was an epitome and type of the temptations to come, against which for forty days He had been making Himself strong, revolving truth beyond our reach, in whose light every commonest duty was awful and divine, a vision fit almost to oppress a God in His humiliation, so shall we understand the whole better if we look

at His life in relation to it. As He refused to make stones bread, so throughout that life He never wrought a miracle to help himself ; as He refused to cast Himself from the temple to convince Satan, or glory visibly in His Sonship, so He steadily refused to give the sign which the human Satans demanded, notwithstanding the offer of conviction which they held forth to bribe Him to the grant. How easy it seems to have confounded them, and strengthened His followers. But such conviction would stand in the way of a better conviction to His disciples, and would do His adversaries only harm. For neither could in any true sense, be convinced by such a show : it could but prove His power. It might prove so far the presence of a God ; but would it prove that God ? Would it bring Him nearer to them, who could not see Him in the face of His Son ? To say *Thou art God*, without knowing what the *Thou* means—of what use is it ? God is a name only except we know *God*. Our Lord did not care to be so acknowledged.

CCCXXIV.

Not all the sovereignty of God, as the theologians call it, delegated to the Son and administered by the wisdom of the Spirit that was given to Him without measure, could have wrought the kingdom of heaven in one corner of our earth. Nothing but the obedi-

ence of the Son, the obedience unto the death, the absolute *doing* of the will of God because it was the truth could redeem the prisoner, the widow, the orphan ; but it would redeem them by redeeming the conquest-ridden-conqueror too, the stripe-giving jailer, the unjust judge, the devouring Pharisee himself, with the insatiable moth-eaten heart. The earth should be free because Love was stronger than Death. Therefore should fierceness and wrong and hypocrisy and God-service play out their weary play. He would not pluck the spreading branches of the tree ; He would lay the axe to its roots. It would take time ; but the tree would be dead at last—dead, and cast into the lake of fire. It would take time ; but His Father had time enough and to spare. It would take courage and strength and self-denial and endurance ; but His Father could give Him all ! It would cost pain of body and mind, yea, agony and torture ; but those He was ready to take on Himself. It would cost him the vision of many sad and, to all but Him, hopeless sights ; He must see tears without wiping them, hear sighs without changing them into laughter, see the dead lie, and let them lie ; see Rachael weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted ; He must look on His brothers and sisters crying as children over their broken toys, and must not mend them : He must go on to the grave, and they not know that thus He was setting all things right for them. His work must be

one with and completing God's Creation and God's History.

CCCXXV.

It is with the holiest fear that we should approach the terrible fact of the sufferings of our Lord. Let no one think that those were less because He was more. The more delicate the nature, the more alive to all that is lovely and true, lawful and right, the more does it feel the antagonism of pain ; the inroad of death upon life ; the more dreadful is that breach of the harmony of things whose sound is torture. He felt more than man can feel, because he had a larger feeling. He was even therefore worn out sooner than another man would have been. These sufferings were awful indeed when they began to invade the region about the will ; when the struggle to keep consciously trusting in God began to sink in darkness ; when the Will of the man put forth its last determined effort in that cry after the vanishing vision of the Father : *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Never had it been so with Him before. Never before had He been unable to see God beside Him. Yet never was God nearer to Him than now. For never was Jesus more divine. He could not see, could not feel Him near ; and yet it is "*My God*" that He cries.

Thus the Will of Jesus, in the very moment when His faith seems about to yield, is finally triumphant.

It has no *feeling* now to support it, no beatific vision to absorb it. It stands naked in His soul and tortured, as He stood naked and scourged before Pilate. Pure and simple and surrounded by fire, it declares for God. The sacrifice ascends in the cry, *My God*. The cry comes not out of happiness, out of peace, out of hope. Not even out of suffering comes that cry. It was a cry in desolation, but it came out of Faith. It is the last voice of truth, speaking when it can but cry. The divine horror of that moment is unfathomable by human soul. It was blackness of darkness. And yet He would believe. Yet He would hold fast. God was His God yet. My God—and in the cry came forth the victory, and all was over soon. Of the peace that followed that cry, the peace of a perfect soul, large as the universe, pure as light, ardent as life, victories for God and His brethren, He Himself alone can ever know the breadth and length, and depth and height.

CCCXXVI.

Despised! Rejected by the priest-led roar
Of multitudes! The imperial purple flung
Around the form the hissing scourge had wrung!
To the bare truth dear witnessing, before
The false, and trembling true! As on the shore
Of infinite love and truth, I kneel among
The blood-prints, and with dumb adoring tongue.

Say to the naked man who ere while wore
The love-wove garment — “Witness to the truth,
Crowned by the witnessing, Thou art King!
With Thee I die, to live in worshipping.
O human God! O brother, eldest born!
Never but Thee was there a man in sooth!
Never a true crown but Thy crown of thorns!”

CCCXXVII.

The Son of God is the Father of men giving to them of his Spirit—that Spirit which manifests the deep things of God, being to a man the mind of Christ the great heresy of the church of the present day in unbelief in this Spirit. The mass of the church does not believe that the Spirit has a revelation for every man individually—a revelation as different from the revelation of the Bible, as the food in the moment of passing into living brain and nerve, differs from the bread and meat.

CCCXXVIII.

The Spirit of God is the Father whose influence is known by its witnessing with our spirit. But may there not be other powers and means of the Spirit preparatory to this its highest office with man? God who has made us can never be far from any man who draws the breath of life—nay, must be in him; not neces-

sarily in his heart, as we say, but still in him. May not then one day some terrible convulsion from the centre of his being, some fearful earthquake from the hidden gulfs of his nature, shake even the most depraved of men through all the deafness of his death; the voice of the Spirit may be faintly heard, the still small voice that comes after the tempest and the earthquake? May there not be a fire even such will feel? Who shall set bounds to the consuming of the fire of our God, and the purifying that dwells therein?

CCCXXIX.

A man will please God better by believing some things that are not told him, than by confining his faith to those things that are expressly said — said to arouse in us the truth-seeing faculty, the spiritual desire, the prayer for the good things which God will give to them that ask Him.

“But is not this dangerous doctrine? Will not a man be taught thus to believe the things he likes best, even to pray for that which he likes best? And will he not grow arrogant in his confidence?”

If it be true that the Spirit strives with our spirit; if it be true that God teaches men, we may safely leave those dreaded results to him. If the man is of the Lord's company, he is safer with him than with those who would secure their safety by hanging on the out-

skirts and daring nothing. If he is not taught of God in that which he hopes for, God will let him know it. He will receive something else than he prays for. If he can pray to God for anything not good, the answer will come in the blazes of the consuming fire. These will soon bring him to some of his spiritual senses. But it will be far better for him to be thus sharply tutored, than to go on a snail's pace in the journey of the spiritual life. And for arrogance, I have seen nothing breed it faster or in more offensive forms than the worship of the letter.

CCCXXX.

Some natures will endure an immense amount of misery before they feel compelled to look for help whence all help and healing comes. They cannot believe that there is verily an unseen mysterious power, till the world and all that is in it has vanished in the smoke of despair; till cause and effect is nothing to the intellect, and possible glories have faded from the imagination; then, deprived of all that made life pleasant or hopeful, the immortal essence, lonely and wretched and unable to cease, looks up with its now unfettered and wakened instinct to the source of its own life — to the possible God who may yet perhaps hear this wretched creature that calls. In this loneliness of despair, life must find The Life for joy is

gone, and life is all that is left ; it is compelled to seek its source, its root, its eternal life. 'This alone remains as a possible thing. Strange condition of despair with which the Spirit of God drives a man — a condition in which the Best alone is the Possible.

CCCXXXI.

Shall God's thoughts be surpassed by man's thoughts? God's giving by man's asking? God's creation by man's imagination? No. Let us climb to the height of our Alpine desires ; let us leave them behind us and ascend the spear-pointed Himmalays of our aspirations ; still shall we find the depth of God's sapphire above us ; still shall we find the heavens higher than the earth, and His thoughts and ways higher than our thoughts and ways.

Ah Lord ! be Thou in all our being ; as not in the Sundays of our time alone, so not in the chambers of our hearts alone. We dare not think that Thou canst not, carest not ; that some things are not for Thy beholding, some questions not to be asked of Thee. For are we not all Thine — utterly Thine? That which a man speaks not to His fellow, we speak to Thee. Our very passions we hold up to Thee, and say, "Behold, Lord ! Think about us ; for Thou hast made us." We would not escape from our history by fleeing into the wilderness, by hiding our heads in the

sands of forgetfulness, or the repentance that comes of pain, or the lethargy of hopefulness. We take it as our very life, in our hand, and flee with it unto Thee. Triumphant is the answer which Thou holdest for every doubt. It may be we could not understand it yet, even if Thou didst speak it "with most miraculous organ." But Thou shalt at least find faith in the earth, O Lord, if Thou comest to look for it now—the faith of ignorant but hoping children, who know that they do not know, and believe that Thou knowest.

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